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A

**Discourse,**

**DELIVERED AT PLYMOUTH,**

DECEMBER 22, 1820.

**In Commemoration of**

**THE FIRST**

**SETTLEMENT OF NEW-ENGLAND.**

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BY

***DANIEL WEBSTER.***

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**THIRD EDITION.**



**BOSTON :**

**WELLS AND LILLY,—COURT-STREET.**

1825.

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BE it remembered, that on the twentieth day of December A. D. 1821, in the forty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Wells & Lilly of the said District, have deposited in this Office the title of a Book, the Right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the Words following, *to wit* :—

“ A Discourse, delivered at Plymouth, December 22, 1820. In commemoration of the First Settlement of New England. By Daniel Webster.”

In Conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled. “ An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies, during the times therein mentioned :” and also to an Act entitled, “ An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies during the times therein mentioned : and extending the benefits thereof to the Arts of Designing, Engraving, and Etching Historical and other Prints ”

JNO W. DAVIS,

*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*



PLYMOUTH, Dec. 23, 1820.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,

SIR,

At a meeting of the Trustees of the PILGRIM SOCIETY, present, *John Watson, William Davis, James Sever, Alden Bradford, Barnabas Hedge, Thomas Jackson, Jr. and Zabdiel Sampson*, Esquires, VOTED, "That the thanks of the Trustees be presented to the HON. DANIEL WEBSTER, for his eloquent and interesting DISCOURSE, delivered at Plymouth, on the 22d instant, at their request, in commemoration of the completion of the second century since the settlement of *New England*—that he be requested to furnish a copy for publication—and that the Corresponding Secretary communicate the preceding vote."

While in the performance of this duty, as honorable as it is pleasing, I am directed to subjoin, that the Committee of the *Massachusetts Historical Society*, and of the *American Antiquarian Society*, who attended on this occasion, by invitation, unite in the request.

With great esteem and regard,

I am, Sir,

Very Respectfully,

SAMUEL DAVIS,

*Corresponding Secretary of the Pilgrim Society.*

BOSTON, Dec. 26, 1820.

SIR,

I HAVE received yours of the 23d, communicating the request of the Trustees of the Pilgrim Society, and of the Committee of the Historical and Antiquarian Societies, that a copy of my Discourse may be furnished for the press. I shall cheerfully comply with this request; but at the same time I must add, that such is the nature of my other engagements, that I hope I may be pardoned if I should be compelled to postpone this compliance to a more distant day than I could otherwise have wished.

I am, Sir, with true regard,

Your most obedient Servant,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

*To SAMUEL DAVIS, Esq.*

*Corresponding Secretary of the Pilgrim Society.*

## DISCOURSE.

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LET us rejoice that we behold this day. Let us be thankful that we have lived to see the bright and happy breaking of the auspicious morn, which commences the third century of the history of New-England. Auspicious indeed; bringing a happiness beyond the common allotment of Providence to men; full of present joy, and gilding with bright beams the prospect of futurity, is the dawn, that awakens us to the commemoration of the Landing of the Pilgrims.

Living at an epoch which naturally marks the progress of the history of our native land, we have come hither to celebrate the great event with which that history commenced. Forever honoured be this, the place of our fathers' refuge! Forever remembered the day which saw them, weary and distressed, broken in every thing but spirit, poor in all but faith and courage, at last secure from the dangers of wintry seas, and impressing this shore with the first footsteps of civilized man!

It is a noble faculty of our nature which enables us to connect our thoughts, our sympathies, and our happiness, with what is distant in place or time ; and, looking before and after, to hold communion at once with our ancestors and our posterity. Human and mortal although we are, we are nevertheless not mere insulated beings, without relation to the past or the future. Neither the point of time, nor the spot of earth, in which we physically live, bounds our rational and intellectual enjoyments. We live in the past by a knowledge of its history ; and in the future by hope and anticipation. By ascending to an association with our ancestors ; by contemplating their example and studying their character ; by partaking their sentiments, and imbibing their spirit ; by accompanying them in their toils, by sympathising in their sufferings, and rejoicing in their successes and their triumphs, we mingle our own existence with theirs, and seem to belong to their age. We become their contemporaries, live the lives which they lived, endure what they endured, and partake in the rewards which they enjoyed. And in like manner, by running along the line of future time, by contemplating the probable fortunes of those who are coming after us ; by attempting something which may promote their happiness, and leave some not dishonourable memorial of ourselves for their regard when we shall sleep with the fathers, we protract our own earthly being, and seem to crowd whatever is future, as

well as all that is past, into the narrow compass of our earthly existence. As it is not a vain and false, but an exalted and religious imagination, which leads us to raise our thoughts from the orb, which, amidst this universe of worlds, the Creator has given us to inhabit, and to send them with something of the feeling which nature prompts, and teaches to be proper among children of the same Eternal Parent, to the contemplation of the myriads of fellow beings, with which his goodness has peopled the infinite of space;—so neither is it false or vain to consider ourselves as interested and connected with our whole race, through all time; allied to our ancestors; allied to our posterity; closely compacted on all sides with others; ourselves being but links in the great chain of being, which begins with the origin of our race, runs onward through its successive generations, binding together the past, the present, and the future, and terminating at last, with the consummation of all things earthly, at the throne of God.

There may be, and there often is, indeed, a regard for ancestry, which nourishes only a weak pride; as there is also a care for posterity, which only disguises an habitual avarice, or hides the workings of a low and grovelling vanity. But there is also a moral and philosophical respect for our ancestors, which elevates the character and improves the heart. Next to the sense of religious duty and moral feeling, I hardly know what should bear with stronger obligation on a liberal and en-

lightened mind, than a consciousness of alliance with excellence which is departed; and a consciousness, too, that in its acts and conduct, and even in its sentiments and thoughts, it may be actively operating on the happiness of those who come after it. Poetry is found to have few stronger conceptions, by which it would affect or overwhelm the mind, than those in which it presents the moving and speaking image of the departed dead to the senses of the living. This belongs to poetry, only because it is congenial to our nature. Poetry is, in this respect, but the hand-maid of true philosophy and morality; it deals with us as human beings, naturally reverencing those whose visible connexion with this state of existence is severed, and who may yet exercise we know not what sympathy with ourselves;—and when it carries us forward, also, and shows us the long continued result of all the good we do, in the prosperity of those who follow us, till it bears us from ourselves, and absorbs us in an intense interest for what shall happen to the generations after us, it speaks only in the language of our nature, and affects us with sentiments which belong to us as human beings.

Standing in this relation to our ancestors and our posterity, we are assembled on this memorable spot, to perform the duties, which that relation and the present occasion impose upon us. We have come to this Rock, to record here our homage for our Pilgrim Fathers; our sympathy in their sufferings; our gratitude for their labours; our admiration of

their virtues; our veneration for their piety; and our attachment to those principles of civil and religious liberty, which they encountered the dangers of the ocean, the storms of heaven, the violence of savages, disease, exile, and famine, to enjoy and to establish. — And we would leave here, also, for the generations which are rising up rapidly to fill our places, some proof, that we have endeavoured to transmit the great inheritance unimpaired; that in our estimate of public principles, and private virtue; in our veneration of religion and piety; in our devotion to civil and religious liberty; in our regard to whatever advances human knowledge, or improves human happiness, we are not altogether unworthy of our origin.

There is a local feeling, connected with this occasion, too strong to be resisted; a sort of *genius of the place*, which inspires and awes us. We feel that we are on the spot, where the first scene of our history was laid; where the hearths and altars of New-England were first placed; where Christianity, and civilization, and letters made their first lodgment, in a vast extent of country, covered with a wilderness, and peopled by roving barbarians. We are here, at the season of the year at which the event took place. The imagination irresistibly and rapidly draws around us the principal features, and the leading characters in the original scene. We cast our eyes abroad on the ocean, and we see where the little barque, with the interesting group upon its



deck, made its slow progress to the shore. We look around us, and behold the hills and promontories, where the anxious eyes of our fathers first saw the places of habitation and of rest. We feel the cold which benumbed, and listen to the winds which pierced them. Beneath us is the Rock, on which New-England received the feet of the Pilgrims. We seem even to behold them, as they struggle with the elements, and, with toilsome efforts gain the shore. We listen to the chiefs in council; we see the unexampled exhibition of female fortitude and resignation; we hear the whisperings of youthful impatience, and we see, what a painter of our own has also represented by his pencil, chilled and shivering childhood, houseless, but for a mother's arms, couchless, but for a mother's breast, till our own blood almost freezes. The mild dignity of CARVER and of BRADFORD; the decisive and soldier-like air and manner of STANDISH; the devout BREWSTER; the enterprising ALLERTON; the general firmness and thoughtfulness of the whole band; their conscious joy for dangers escaped; their deep solicitude about dangers to come; their trust in heaven; their high religious faith, full of confidence and anticipation:—all these seem to belong to this place, and to be present upon this occasion, to fill us with reverence and admiration.

The settlement of New-England by the colony which landed here on the twenty second of December, sixteen hundred and twenty, although not the



first European establishment in what now constitutes the United States, was yet so peculiar in its causes and character, and has been followed, and must still be followed, by such consequences, as to give it a high claim to lasting commemoration. On these causes and consequences, more than on its immediately attendant circumstances, its importance as an historical event depends. Great actions and striking occurrences, having excited a temporary admiration, often pass away and are forgotten, because they leave no lasting results, affecting the prosperity and happiness of communities. Such is frequently the fortune of the most brilliant military achievements. Of the ten thousand battles which have been fought; of all the fields fertilized with carnage; of the banners which have been bathed in blood; of the warriors who have hoped that they had risen from the field of conquest to a glory as bright and as durable as the stars, how few that continue long to interest mankind! The victory of yesterday is reversed by the defeat of to-day; the star of military glory, rising like a meteor, like a meteor has fallen; disgrace and disaster hang on the heels of conquest and renown; victor and vanquished presently pass away to oblivion, and the world goes on in its course, with the loss only of so many lives and so much treasure.

But if this be frequently, or generally, the fortune of military achievements, it is not always so. There are enterprises, military as well as civil, which sometimes check the current of events, give a new turn

to human affairs, and transmit their consequences through ages. We see their importance in their results, and call them great, because great things follow. There have been battles which have fixed the fate of nations. These come down to us in history with a solid and permanent interest, not created by a display of glittering armour, the rush of adverse battalions, the sinking and rising of pennons, the flight, the pursuit, and the victory; but by their effect in advancing or retarding human knowledge, in overthrowing or establishing despotism, in extending or destroying human happiness. When the traveller pauses on the plain of Marathon, what are the emotions which most strongly agitate his breast? What is that glorious recollection, which thrills through his frame, and suffuses his eyes?—Not, I imagine, that Grecian skill and Grecian valour were here most signally displayed; but that Greece herself was here saved. It is because to this spot, and to the event which has rendered it immortal, he refers all the succeeding glories of the republic. It is because if that day had gone otherwise, Greece had perished. It is because he perceives that her philosophers, and orators, her poets and painters, her sculptors and architects, her governments and free institutions, point backward to Marathon, and that their future existence seems to have been suspended on the contingency, whether the Persian or the Grecian banner should wave victorious in the beams of that day's setting sun. And as his imagination kindles at

the retrospect, he is transported back to the interesting moment, he counts the fearful odds of the contending hosts, his interest for the result overwhelms him; he trembles, as if it were still uncertain, and seems to doubt, whether he may consider Socrates and Plato, Demosthenes, Sophocles and Phidias, as secure, yet, to himself and to the world.

“If we conquer,” said the Athenian commander on the morning of that decisive day,—“If we conquer, we shall make Athens the greatest city of Greece.” A prophecy, how well fulfilled!—“If God prosper us,” might have been the more appropriate language of our Fathers, when they landed upon this Rock,—“if God prosper us, we shall here begin a work which shall last for ages; we shall plant here a new society, in the principles of the fullest liberty, and the purest religion: we shall subdue this wilderness which is before us; we shall fill this region of the great continent, which stretches almost from pole to pole, with civilization and christianity; the temples of the true God shall rise, where now ascends the smoke of idolatrous sacrifice; fields and gardens, the flowers of summer, and the waving and golden harvests of autumn, shall extend over a thousand hills, and stretch along a thousand vallies, never yet, since the creation, reclaimed to the use of civilized man. We shall whiten this coast with the canvas of a prosperous commerce; we shall stud the long and winding shore with an hundred cities. That which we sow in weakness shall

be raised in strength. From our sincere but houseless worship, there shall spring splendid temples to record God's goodness; from the simplicity of our social union, there shall arise wise and politic constitutions of government, full of the liberty which we ourselves bring and breathe; from our zeal for learning, institutions shall spring, which shall scatter the light of knowledge throughout the land, and, in time, paying back where they have borrowed, shall contribute their part to the great aggregate of human knowledge; and our descendants, through all generations, shall look back to this spot, and to this hour, with unabated affection and regard."

A brief remembrance of the causes which led to the settlement of this place; some account of the peculiarities and characteristic qualities of that settlement, as distinguished from other instances of colonization; a short notice of the progress of New-England in the great interests of Society, during the century which is now elapsed; with a few observations on the principles upon which society and government are established in this country;—comprise all that can be attempted, and much more than can be satisfactorily performed on the present occasion.

Of the motives which influenced the first settlers to a voluntary exile, induced them to relinquish their native country, and to seek an asylum in this then unexplored wilderness, the first and principal, no doubt, were connected with Religion. They sought to enjoy a higher degree of Religious freedom, and

what they esteemed a purer form of Religious worship, than was allowed to their choice, or presented to their imitation, in the old world. The love of Religious Liberty is a stronger sentiment, when fully excited, than an attachment to civil or political freedom. That freedom which the conscience demands, and which men feel bound by their hopes of salvation to contend for, can hardly fail to be attained. Conscience, in the cause of Religion, and the worship of the Deity, prepares the mind to act, and to suffer beyond almost all other causes. It sometimes gives an impulse so irresistible, that no fetters of power or of opinion can withstand it. History instructs us that this love of Religious liberty, a compound sentiment in the breast of man, made up of the clearest sense of right, and the highest conviction of duty, is able to look the sternest despotism in the face, and with means apparently most inadequate, to shake principalities and powers. There is a boldness, a spirit of daring, in religious reformers, not to be measured by the general rules which controul men's purposes and actions. If the hand of power be laid upon it, this only seems to augment its force and its elasticity, and to cause its action to be more formidable and terrible. Human invention has devised nothing, human power has compassed nothing that can forcibly restrain it, when it breaks forth. Nothing can stop it, but to give way to it; nothing can check it, but indulgence. It loses its power only when it has gained its object. The

principle of toleration, to which the world has come so slowly, is at once the most just and the most wise of all principles. Even when religious feeling takes a character of extravagance and enthusiasm, and seems to threaten the order of society, and shake the columns of the social edifice, its principal danger is in its restraint. If it be allowed indulgence and expansion, like the elemental fires it only agitates and perhaps purifies the atmosphere, while its efforts to throw off restraint would burst the world asunder.

It is certain, that although many of them were republicans in principle, we have no evidence that our New-England ancestors would have emigrated, as they did, from their own native country, become wanderers in Europe, and finally undertaken the establishment of a colony here, merely from their dislike of the political systems of Europe. They fled not so much from the civil government, as from the Hierarchy, and the laws which enforced conformity to the Church Establishment. Mr. Robinson had left England as early as sixteen hundred and eight, on account of the prosecutions for non-conformity, and had retired to Holland. He left England, from no disappointed ambition in affairs of state, from no regrets at the want of preferment in the church, nor from any motive of distinction, or of gain. Uniformity in matters of Religion was pressed with such extreme rigour, that a voluntary exile seemed the most eligible mode of escaping from the

penalties of non-compliance. The accession of Elizabeth had, it is true, quenched the fires of Smithfield, and put an end to the easy acquisition of the crown of martyrdom. Her long reign had established the Reformation, but toleration was a virtue beyond her conception, and beyond the age. She left no example of it to her successor; and he was not of a character which rendered it probable that a sentiment either so wise or so liberal should originate with him. At the present period it seems incredible, that the learned, accomplished, unassuming, and inoffensive Robinson should neither be tolerated in his own peaceable mode of worship, in his own country, nor suffered quietly to depart from it. Yet such was the fact. He left his country by stealth, that he might elsewhere enjoy those rights which ought to belong to men in all countries. The embarkation of the Pilgrims for Holland is deeply interesting from its circumstances, and also as it marks the character of the times; independently of its connexion with names now incorporated with the history of empire. The embarkation was intended to be in the night, that it might escape the notice of the officers of government. Great pains had been taken to secure boats, which should come undiscovered to the shore, and receive the fugitives; and frequent disappointments had been experienced in this respect. At length the appointed time came, bringing with it unusual severity of cold and rain. An unfrequented and barren heath, on the shores of

Lincolnshire, was the selected spot, where the feet of the Pilgrims were to tread, for the last time, the land of their fathers.

The vessel which was to receive them did not come until the next day, and in the mean time the little band was collected, and men and women and children and baggage were crowded together, in melancholy and distressed confusion. The sea was rough, and the women and children already sick, from their passage down the river to the place of embarkation. At length the wished for boat silently and fearfully approaches the shore, and men and women and children, shaking with fear and with cold, as many as the small vessel could bear, venture off on a dangerous sea. Immediately the advance of horses is heard from behind, armed men appear, and those not yet embarked are seized, and taken into custody. In the hurry of the moment, there had been no regard to the keeping together of families, in the first embarkation, and on account of the appearance of the horsemen, the boat never returned for the residue. Those who had got away, and those who had not, were in equal distress. A storm, of great violence and long duration, arose at sea, which not only protracted the voyage, rendered distressing by the want of all those accommodations which the interruption of the embarkation had occasioned, but also forced the vessel out of her course, and menaced immediate shipwreck; while those on shore, when they were dismissed from the custody of the



officers of justice, having no longer homes or houses to retire to, and their friends and protectors being already gone, became objects of necessary charity as well as of deep commiseration.

As this scene passes before us, we can hardly forbear asking, whether this be a band of malefactors and felons flying from justice? What are their crimes, that they hide themselves in darkness!—To what punishment are they exposed, that to avoid it, men, and women, and children, thus encounter the surf of the North Sea, and the terrors of a night storm? What induces this armed pursuit, and this arrest of fugitives, of all ages and both sexes?—Truth does not allow us to answer these inquiries, in a manner that does credit to the wisdom or the justice of the times. This was not the flight of guilt, but of virtue. It was an humble and peaceable religion, flying from causeless oppression. It was conscience, attempting to escape from the arbitrary rule of the Stuarts. It was Robinson, and Brewster, leading off their little band from their native soil, at first to find shelter on the shores of the neighbouring continent, but ultimately to come hither; and having surmounted all difficulties, and braved a thousand dangers, to find here a place of refuge and of rest. Thanks be to God, that this spot was honoured as the asylum of religious liberty. May its standard, reared here, remain forever!—May it rise up as high as heaven, till its banner shall fan the air of both continents, and wave as a glorious ensign of peace and security to the nations!

The peculiar character, condition, and circumstances of the colonies which introduced civilization and an English race into New-England, afford a most interesting and extensive topic of discussion. On these much of our subsequent character and fortune has depended. Their influence has essentially affected our whole history, through the two centuries which have elapsed; and as they have become intimately connected with government, laws, and property, as well as with our opinions on the subjects of religion and civil liberty, that influence is likely to continue to be felt through the centuries which shall succeed. Emigration from one region to another, and the emission of colonies to people countries more or less distant from the residence of the parent stock, are common incidents in the history of mankind; but it has not often, perhaps never happened, that the establishment of colonies should be attempted, under circumstances, however beset with present difficulties and dangers, yet so favourable to ultimate success, and so conducive to magnificent results, as those which attended the first settlements on this part of the continent. In other instances, emigration has proceeded from a less exalted purpose, in a period of less general intelligence, or more without plan and by accident; or under circumstances, physical and moral, less favourable to the expectation of laying a foundation for great public prosperity and future empire.

A great resemblance exists, obviously, between

all the English colonies, established within the present limits of the United States; but the occasion attracts our attention more immediately to those which took possession of New-England, and the peculiarities of these furnish a strong contrast with most other instances of colonization.

Among the ancient nations, the Greeks, no doubt, sent forth from their territories the greatest number of colonies. So numerous indeed were they, and so great the extent of space over which they were spread, that the parent country fondly and naturally persuaded herself, that by means of them she had laid a sure foundation for the universal civilization of the world. These establishments, from obvious causes, were most numerous in places most contiguous; yet they were found on the coasts of France, on the shores of the Euxine sea, in Africa, and even, as is alleged, on the borders of India. [These emigrations appear to have been sometimes voluntary and sometimes compulsory; arising from the spontaneous enterprise of individuals, or the order and regulation of government. It was a common opinion with ancient writers, that they were undertaken in religious obedience to the commands of oracles; and it is probable that impressions of this sort might have had more or less influence; but it is probable, also, that on these occasions the oracles did not speak a language dissonant from the views and purposes of the state.

Political science among the Greeks seems never

to have extended to the comprehension of a system, which should be adequate to the government of a great nation upon principles of liberty. They were accustomed only to the contemplation of small republics, and were lead to consider an augmented population as incompatible with free institutions. The desire of a remedy for this supposed evil, and the wish to establish marts for trade, led the governments often to undertake the establishment of colonies as an affair of state expediency. Colonization and commerce, indeed, would naturally become objects of interest to an ingenious and enterprising people, inhabiting a territory closely circumscribed in its limits, and in no small part mountainous and sterile; while the islands of the adjacent seas, and the promontories and coasts of the neighbouring continents, by there mere proximity, strongly solicited the excited spirit of emigration. Such was this proximity, in many instances, that the new settlements appeared rather to be the mere extension of population over contiguous territory, than the establishment of distant colonies. In proportion as they were near to the parent state, they would be under its authority, and partake of its fortunes. The colony at Marseilles might perceive lightly, or not at all, the sway of Phocis; while the islands in the Egean sea could hardly attain to independence of their Athenian origin. Many of these establishments took place at an early age; and if there were defects in the governments of the parent states, the



colonists did not possess philosophy or experience sufficient to correct such evils in their own institutions, even if they had not been, by other causes, deprived of the power. An immediate necessity, connected with the support of life, was the main and direct inducement to these undertakings, and there could hardly exist more than the hope of a successful imitation of institutions with which they were already acquainted, and of holding an equality with their neighbours in the course of improvement. The laws and customs, both political and municipal, as well as the religious worship of the parent city, were transferred to the colony; and the parent city herself, with all such of her colonies as were not too far remote for frequent intercourse and common sentiments, would appear like a family of cities, more or less dependent, and more or less connected. We know how imperfect this system was, as a system of general politics, and what scope it gave to those mutual dissensions and conflicts which proved so fatal to Greece.

But it is more pertinent to our present purpose to observe, that nothing existed in the character of Grecian emigrations, or in the spirit and intelligence of the emigrants, likely to give a new and important direction to human affairs, or a new impulse to the human mind. Their motives were not high enough, their views were not sufficiently large and prospective. They went not forth, like our ancestors, to erect systems of more perfect civil liberty, or to

enjoy a higher degree of religious freedom. Above all, there was nothing in the religion and learning of the age, that could either inspire high purposes, or give the ability to execute them. Whatever restraints on civil liberty, or whatever abuses in religious worship, existed at the time of our fathers' emigration, yet, even then, all was light in the moral and mental world, in comparison with its condition in most periods of the ancient states. The settlement of a new continent, in an age of progressive knowledge and improvement, could not but do more than merely enlarge the natural boundaries of the habitable world. It could not but do much more even than extend commerce and increase wealth among the human race. We see how this event has acted, how it must have acted, and wonder only why it did not act sooner, in the production of moral effects on the state of human knowledge, the general tone of human sentiments, and the prospects of human happiness. It gave to civilized man not only a new continent to be inhabited and cultivated, and new seas to be explored; but it gave him also a new range for his thoughts, new objects for curiosity, and new excitements to knowledge and improvement.

Roman colonization resembled, far less than that of the Greeks, the original settlements of this country. Power and dominion were the objects of Rome, even in her colonial establishments. Her whole exterior aspect was for centuries hostile and terrific. She grasped at dominion, from India to

Britain, and her measures of colonization partook of the character of her general system. Her policy was military, because her objects were power, ascendancy, and subjugation. Detachments of emigrants from Rome incorporated themselves with, and governed, the original inhabitants of conquered countries. She sent citizens where she had first sent soldiers; her law followed her sword. Her colonies were a sort of military establishment; so many advanced posts in the career of her dominion. A governor from Rome ruled the new colony with absolute sway, and often with unbounded rapacity. In Sicily, in Gaul, in Spain, and in Asia, the power of Rome prevailed, not nominally only, but really and effectually. Those who immediately exercised it were Roman; the tone and tendency of its administration, Roman. Rome herself continued to be the heart and centre of the great system which she had established. Extortion and rapacity, finding a wide and often rich field of action in the provinces, looked nevertheless to the banks of the Tiber, as the scene in which their ill-gotten treasures should be displayed; or if a spirit of more honest acquisition prevailed, the object, nevertheless, was ultimate enjoyment in Rome itself. If our own history, and our own times did not sufficiently expose the inherent and incurable evils of provincial government, we might see them pourtrayed, to our amazement, in the desolated and ruined provinces of the Roman empire. We might hear them, in a

voice that terrifies us, in those strains of complaint and accusation, which the advocates of the provinces poured forth in the Roman Forum.—“*Quas res luxuries in flagitiis, crudelitas in suppliciis, avaritia in rapinis, superbia in contumeliis, efficere potuisset, eas omneis sese pertulisse.*”

As was to be expected, the Roman provinces partook of the fortunes as well as of the sentiments and general character of the seat of empire. They lived together with her, they flourished with her, and fell with her. The branches were lopped away even before the vast and venerable trunk itself fell prostrate to the earth. Nothing had proceeded from her, which could support itself, and bear up the name of its origin, when her own sustaining arm should be enfeebled or withdrawn. It was not given to Rome to see, either at her zenith, or in her decline, a child of her own, distant indeed, and independent of her controul, yet speaking her language and inheriting her blood, springing forward to a competition with her own power, and a comparison with her own great renown. She saw not a vast region of the earth, peopled from her stock, full of states and political communities, improving upon the models of her institutions, and breathing in fuller measure the spirit which she had breathed in the best periods of her existence; enjoying and extending her arts and her literature; rising rapidly from political childhood to manly strength and independence; her offspring, yet now her equal; unconnected with the



causes which might affect the duration of her own power and greatness; of common origin, but not linked to a common fate; giving ample pledge, that her name should not be forgotten, that her language should not cease to be used among men; that whatsoever she had done for human knowledge and human happiness, should be treasured up and preserved; that the record of her existence, and her achievements, should not be obscured, although, in the inscrutable purposes of Providence, it might be her destiny to fall from opulence and splendour; although the time might come, when darkness should settle on all her hills; when foreign or domestic violence should overturn her altars and her temples; when ignorance and despotism should fill the places where Laws, and Arts, and Liberty had flourished; when the feet of barbarism should trample on the tombs of her consuls, and the walls of her senate house and forum echo only to the voice of savage triumph. She saw not this glorious vision, to inspire and fortify her against the possible decay or downfall of her power. Happy are they, who in our day may behold it, if they shall contemplate it with the sentiments which it ought to inspire!

The New-England colonies differ quite as widely from the Asiatic establishments of the modern European Nations, as from the models of the Ancient States. The sole object of those establishments was originally trade; although we have seen, in one of them, the anomaly of a mere trading company

attaining a political character, disbursing revenues, and maintaining armies and fortresses, until it has extended its control over seventy millions of people. Differing from these and still differing more from the New-England and North American Colonies, are the European settlements in the West India Islands. It is not strange, that when men's minds were turned to the settlement of America, different objects should be proposed by those who emigrated to the different regions of so vast a country. Climate, soil, and condition were not all equally favourable to all pursuits. In the West Indies, the purpose of those who went thither, was to engage in that species of agriculture, suited to the soil and climate, which seems to bear more resemblance to commerce, than to the hard and plain tillage of New-England. The great staples of these countries, being partly an agricultural and partly a manufactured product, and not being of the necessaries of life, become the object of calculation, with respect to a profitable investment of capital, like any other enterprise of trade or manufacture; and more especially, as they require, by necessity or habit, slave labour for their production, the capital necessary to carry on the work of this production is more considerable. The West Indies are resorted to, therefore, rather for the investment of capital, than for the purpose of sustaining life by personal labour. Such as possess a considerable amount of capital, or such as choose to adventure in commercial speculations without

capital, can alone be fitted to be emigrants to the islands. The agriculture of these regions, as before observed, is a sort of commerce ; and it is a species of employment, in which labour seems to form an inconsiderable ingredient in the productive causes ; since the portion of white labour is exceedingly small, and slave labour is rather more like profit on stock, or capital, than *labour* properly so called. The individual who contemplates an establishment of this kind, takes into the account the cost of the necessary number of slaves, in the same manner as he calculates the cost of the land. The uncertainty, too, of this species of employment, affords another ground of resemblance to commerce. Although gainful, on the whole, and in a series of years, it is often very disastrous for a single year, and as the capital is not readily invested in other pursuits, bad crops, or bad markets, not only affect the profits, but the capital itself. Hence the sudden depressions which take place in the value of such estates.

But the great and leading observation, relative to these establishments, remains to be made. It is, that the owners of the soil and of the capital seldom consider themselves *at home* in the colony. A very great portion of the soil itself is usually owned in the mother country ; a still greater is mortgaged for capital obtained there ; and, in general, those who are to derive an interest from the products, look to the parent country as the place for enjoyment of their wealth. The population is therefore constantly fluc-

tuating. Nobody comes but to return. A constant succession of owners, agents, and factors takes place. Whatsoever the soil, forced by the unmitigated toil of slavery, can yield, is borne home to defray rents, and interest, and agencies; or to give the means of living in a better society. In such a state, it is evident that no spirit of permanent improvement is likely to spring up. Profits will not be invested with a distant view of benefiting posterity. Roads and canals will hardly be built; schools will not be founded; colleges will not be endowed. There will be few fixtures in society; no principles of utility or of elegance, planted now, with the hope of being developed and expanded hereafter. Profit, immediate profit, must be the principal active spring in the social system. There may be many particular exceptions to these general remarks, but the outline of the whole, is such as is here drawn.

Another most important consequence of such a state of things is, that no idea of independence of the parent country is likely to arise; unless indeed it should spring up in a form, that would threaten universal desolation. The inhabitants have no strong attachment to the place which they inhabit. The hope of a great portion of them is to leave it; and their great desire, to leave it soon. However useful they may be to the parent state, how much soever they may add to the conveniences and luxuries of life, these colonies are not favoured spots for the expansion of the human mind, for the progress of

permanent improvement, or for sowing the seeds of future independent empire.

Different, indeed, most widely different, from all these instances of emigration and plantation, were the condition, the purposes, and the prospects of our Fathers, when they established their infant colony upon this spot. They came hither to a land from which they were never to return. Hither they had brought, and here they were to fix, their hopes, their attachments, and their objects. Some natural tears they shed, as they left the pleasant abodes of their fathers, and some emotions they suppressed, when the white cliffs of their native country, now seen for the last time, grew dim to their sight. They were acting however upon a resolution not to be changed. With whatever stifled regrets, with whatever occasional hesitation, with whatever appalling apprehensions, which might sometimes arise with force to shake the firmest purpose, they had yet committed themselves to heaven and the elements; and a thousand leagues of water soon interposed to separate them forever from the region which gave them birth. A new existence awaited them here; and when they saw these shores, rough, cold, barbarous, and barren as then they were, they beheld their country. That mixed and strong feeling, which we call love of country, and which is, in general, never extinguished in the heart of man, grasped and embraced its proper object here. Whatever constitutes *country*, except the earth and the sun, all the

moral causes of affection and attachment, which operate upon the heart, they had brought with them to their new abode. Here were now their families and friends; their homes, and their property. Before they reached the shore, they had established the elements of a social system, and at a much earlier period had settled their forms of religious worship. At the moment of their landing, therefore, they possessed institutions of government, and institutions of religion: and friends and families, and social and religious institutions, established by consent, founded on choice and preference, how nearly do these fill up our whole idea of country!—The morning that beamed on the first night of their repose, saw the Pilgrims already established in their country. There were political institutions, and civil liberty, and religious worship. Poetry has fancied nothing, in the wanderings of heroes, so distinct and characteristic. Here was man, indeed, unprotected, and unprovided for, on the shore of a rude and fearful wilderness; but it was politic, intelligent and educated man. Every thing was civilized but the physical world. Institutions containing in substance all that ages had done for human government, were established in a forest. Cultivated mind was to act on uncultivated nature; and, more than all, a government, and a country, were to commence with the very first foundations laid under the divine light of the christian religion. Happy auspices of a happy futurity! Who would wish, that his country's exis-

tence had otherwise begun?—Who would desire the power of going back to the ages of fable? Who would wish for an origin, obscured in the darkness of antiquity?—Who would wish for other emblazoning of his country's heraldry, or other ornaments of her genealogy, than to be able to say, that her first existence was with intelligence; her first breath the inspirations of liberty; her first principle the truth of divine religion?

Local attachments and sympathies would ere long spring up in the breasts of our ancestors, endearing to them the place of their refuge. Whatever natural objects are associated with interesting scenes and high efforts, obtain a hold on human feeling, and demand from the heart a sort of recognition and regard. This Rock soon became hallowed in the esteem of the Pilgrims, and these hills grateful to their sight. Neither they nor their children were again to till the soil of England, nor again to traverse the seas which surrounded her. But here was a new sea, now open to their enterprise, and a new soil, which had not failed to respond gratefully to their laborious industry, and which was already assuming a robe of verdure. Hardly had they provided shelter for the living, ere they were summoned to erect sepulchres for the dead. The ground had become sacred, by enclosing the remains of some of their companions and connexions. A parent, a child, a husband or a wife, had gone the way of all flesh, and mingled with the dust of New-England.

We naturally look with strong emotions to the spot, though it be a wilderness, where the ashes of those we have loved repose. Where the heart has laid down what it loved most, it is desirous of laying itself down. No sculptured marble, no enduring monument, no honourable inscription, no ever burning taper that would drive away the darkness of death, can soften our sense of the reality of mortality, and hallow to our feelings the ground which is to cover us, like the consciousness that we shall sleep, dust to dust, with the objects of our affections.

In a short time other causes sprung up to bind the Pilgrims with new cords to their chosen land. Children were born, and the hopes of future generations arose, in the spot of their new habitation. The second generation found this the land of their nativity, and saw that they were bound to its fortunes. They beheld their father's graves around them, and while they read the memorials of their toils and labours, they rejoiced in the inheritance which they found bequeathed to them.

Under the influence of these causes, it was to be expected, that an interest and a feeling should arise here, entirely different from the interest and feeling of mere Englishmen; and all the subsequent history of the colonies proves this to have actually and gradually taken place. With the general acknowledgment of the supremacy of the British crown, there was, from the first, a repugnance to an entire submission to the control of British legislation. The



colonies stood upon their charters, which as they contended, exempted them from the ordinary power of the British parliament, and authorized them to conduct their own concerns by their own councils. They utterly resisted the notion that they were to be ruled by the mere authority of the government at home, and would not endure even that their own charter governments should be established on the other side of the Atlantic. It was not a controlling or protecting board in England, but a government of their own, and existing immediately within their limits, which could satisfy their wishes. It was easy to foresee, what we know also to have happened, that the first great cause of collision and jealousy would be, under the notion of political economy then and still prevalent in Europe, an attempt on the part of the mother country to monopolize the trade of the colonies. Whoever has looked deeply into the causes which produced our revolution, has found, if I mistake not, the original principle far back in this claim, on the part of England, to monopolize our trade, and a continued effort on the part of the colonies to resist or evade that monopoly; if indeed it be not still more just and philosophical to go farther back, and to consider it decided, that an independent government must arise here, the moment it was ascertained that an English colony, such as landed in this place, could sustain itself against the dangers which surrounded it, and, with other similar establishments, overspread the land with an

English population. Accidental causes retarded at times, and at times accelerated the progress of the controversy. The colonies wanted strength, and time gave it to them. They required measures of strong and palpable injustice on the part of the mother country, to justify resistance; the early part of the late King's reign furnished them. They needed spirits of high order, of great daring, of long foresight and of commanding power, to seize the favouring occasion to strike a blow, which should sever, forever, the tie of colonial dependence; and these spirits were found, in all the extent which that or any crisis could demand, in Otis, Adams, Hancock, and the other immediate authors of our independence. Still it is true, that for a century, causes had been in operation tending to prepare things for this great result. In the year 1660 the English act of Navigation was passed; the first and grand object of which seems to have been to secure to England the whole trade with her plantations. It was provided, by that act, that none but English ships should transport American produce over the ocean; and that the principal articles of that produce should be allowed to be sold only in the markets of the mother country. Three years afterwards another law was passed, which enacted, that such commodities as the colonies might wish to purchase, should be bought only in the markets of the mother country. Severe rules were prescribed to enforce the provisions of these laws, and heavy penalties impos-

ed on all who should violate them. In the subsequent years of the same reign, other statutes were passed, to reinforce these statutes, and other rules prescribed, to secure a compliance with these rules. In this manner was the trade, to and from the colonies, tied up, almost to the exclusive advantage of the parent country. But laws, which rendered the interest of a whole people subordinate to that of another people, were not likely to execute themselves; nor was it easy to find many on the spot, who could be depended upon for carrying them into execution. In fact, these laws were more or less evaded, or resisted, in all the colonies. To enforce them was the constant endeavour of the government at home; to prevent or elude their operation, the perpetual object here. "The laws of navigation," says a living British writer, "were no where so openly disobeyed and contemned, as in New-England." "The people of Massachusetts Bay," he adds, "were from the first disposed to act as if independent of the mother country, and having a Governor and magistrates of their own choice, it was difficult to enforce any regulation which came from the English parliament, adverse to their interests." To provide more effectually for the execution of these laws, we know that courts of admiralty were afterwards established by the crown, with power to try revenue causes, as questions of admiralty, upon the construction, given by the crown lawyers, to an act of parliament;—a great departure from the

ordinary principles of English jurisprudence, but which has been maintained, nevertheless, by the force of habit and precedent, and is adopted in our own existing systems of government.

“There lie,” says another English writer, whose connexion with the Board of Trade has enabled him to ascertain many facts connected with colonial history,—“There lie among the documents in the board of trade and paper office, the most satisfactory proofs, from the epoch of the English revolution in 1688, throughout every reign, and during every administration, of the settled purpose of the colonies to acquire direct independence and positive sovereignty.” Perhaps this may be stated somewhat too strongly; but it cannot be denied, that from the very nature of the establishments here, and from the general character of the measures respecting their concerns, early adopted, and steadily pursued by the English government, a division of the empire was the natural and necessary result to which every thing tended.

I have dwelt on this topic, because it seems to me, that the peculiar original character of the New-England colonies, and certain causes coeval with their existence, have had a strong and decided influence on all their subsequent history, and especially on the great event of the Revolution. Whoever would write our history, and would understand and explain early transactions, should comprehend the nature and force of the feeling which I have endeavoured

to describe. As a son, leaving the house of his father for his own, finds, by the order of nature, and the very law of his being, nearer and dearer objects around which his affections circle, while his attachment to the parental roof becomes moderated, by degrees, to a composed regard, and an affectionate remembrance; so our ancestors, leaving their native land, not without some violence to the feelings of nature and affection, yet in time found here, a new circle of engagements, interests, and affections; a feeling, which more and more encroached upon the old, till an undivided sentiment, *that this was their country*, occupied the heart; and patriotism, shutting out from its embraces the parent realm, became *local* to America.

Some retrospect of the century which has now elapsed, is among the duties of the occasion. It must, however, necessarily be imperfect, to be compressed within the limits of a single discourse. I shall content myself, therefore, with taking notice of a few of the leading, and most important, occurrences, which have distinguished the period.

When the first century closed, the progress of the country appeared to have been considerable; notwithstanding that, in comparison with its subsequent advancement, it now seems otherwise. A broad and lasting foundation had been laid: excellent institutions had been established; much of the prejudices of former times had become removed; a more liberal and catholic spirit on subjects of religious concern had

begun to extend itself, and many things conspired to give promise of increasing future prosperity. Great men had arisen in public life and the liberal professions. The Mathers, father and son, were then sinking low in the western horizon; Leverett, the learned, the accomplished, the excellent Leverett, was about to withdraw his brilliant and useful light. In Pemberton, great hopes had been suddenly extinguished, but Prince and Colman, were in our sky; and the crepuscular light had begun to flash along the East, of a great luminary which was about to appear; and which was to mark the age with his own name, as the age of Franklin.

The bloody Indian wars, which harassed the people for a part of the first century; the restrictions on the trade of the Colonies—added to the discouragements inherently belonging to all forms of colonial government; the distance from Europe, and the small hope of immediate profit to adventurers, are among the causes which had contributed to retard the progress of population. Perhaps it may be added, also, that during the period of the civil wars in England, and the reign of Cromwell, many persons, whose religious opinions and religious temper might, under other circumstances have induced them to join the New-England colonists, found reasons to remain in England; either on account of active occupation in the scenes which were passing, or of an anticipation of the enjoyment, in their own country, of a form of government, civil and religious, accommo-

dated to their views and principles. The violent measures, too, pursued against the Colonies in the reign of Charles the second, the mockery of a trial, and the forfeiture of the Charters, were serious evils. And during the open violences of the short reign of James the second, and the tyranny of Andros, as the venerable historian of Connecticut observes, "*All the motives to great actions, to industry, economy, enterprize, wealth, and population, were in a manner annihilated. A general inactivity and languishment pervaded the public body. Liberty, property, and every thing which ought to be dear to men, every day grew more and more insecure.*"

With the revolution in England, a better prospect had opened on this country, as well as on that. The joy had been as great, at that event, and far more universal in *New*, than in *Old* England. A new Charter had been granted to Massachusetts, which, although it did not confirm to her inhabitants all their former privileges, yet relieved them from great evils and embarrassments, and promised future security. More than all, perhaps, the revolution in England, had done good to the *general* cause of liberty and justice. A blow had been struck, in favour of the rights and liberties, not of England alone, but of descendants and kinsmen of England, all over the world. Great political truths had been established. The champions of liberty had been successful in a fearful and perilous conflict. Somers, and Cavendish, and Jekyl, and Howard, had tri-

umphed in one of the most noble causes ever undertaken by men. A revolution had been made upon principle. A monarch had been dethroned, for violating the original compact between King and People. The rights of the people to partake in the government, and to limit the monarch by fundamental rules of government, had been maintained; and however unjust the government of England might afterwards be, towards other governments or towards her colonies, she had ceased to be governed herself, by the arbitrary maxims of the Stuarts.

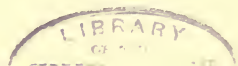
New-England had submitted to the violence of James the second, not longer than Old England. Not only was it reserved to Massachusetts, that on her soil should be acted the first scene of that great revolutionary Drama, which was to take place near a century afterwards, but the English revolution itself, as far as the Colonies were concerned, commenced in Boston. A direct and forcible resistance to the authority of James the second, was the seizure and imprisonment of Andros, in April 1689. The pulse of Liberty beat as high in the extremities, as at the heart. The vigorous feeling of the Colony burst out, before it was known how the parent country would finally conduct itself. The King's representative, Sir Edmund Andros, was a prisoner in the Castle at Boston, before it was or could be known, that the King himself had ceased to exercise his full dominion on the English throne.

Before it was known here, whether the invasion



of the Prince of Orange would or could prove successful; as soon only as it was known that it had been undertaken, the people of Massachusetts, at the imminent hazard of their lives and fortunes, had accomplished the revolution as far as respected themselves. It is probable, that, reasoning on general principles, and the known attachment of the English people to their constitution and liberties, and their deep and fixed dislike of the King's religion and politics, the people of New-England expected a catastrophe fatal to the power of the reigning Prince. Yet, it was not either certain enough, or near enough to come to their aid against the authority of the crown, in that crisis which had arrived, and in which they trusted to put themselves, relying on God, and on their own courage. There were spirits in Massachusetts, congenial with the spirits of the distinguished friends of the revolution in England. There were those, who were fit to associate with the boldest asserters of civil liberty; and Mather himself, then in England, was not unworthy to be ranked with those sons of the church, whose firmness and spirit, in resisting kingly encroachment in religion, entitled them to the gratitude of their own and succeeding ages.

The Second Century opened upon New-England under circumstances, which evinced, that much had already been accomplished, and that still better prospects, and brighter hopes, were before her. She had laid, deep and strong, the foundations of



her society. Her religious principles were firm, and her moral habits exemplary. Her public schools had begun to diffuse widely the elements of knowledge; and the College, under the excellent and acceptable administration of Leverett, had been raised to a high degree of credit and usefulness.

The commercial character of the country, notwithstanding all discouragements, had begun to display itself, and *five hundred vessels*, then belonging to Massachusetts, placed her in relation to commerce, thus early, at the head of the colonies. An author who wrote very near the close of the first century says; “New-England is almost deserving that *noble name*; so mightily hath it increased; and from a small settlement, at first, is now become a *very populous* and *flourishing* government. The *capital city*, Boston, is a place of *great wealth and trade*; and by much the largest of any in the English empire of America; and not exceeded but by few cities, perhaps two or three, in all the American world.”

But, if our ancestors at the close of the first century, could look back with joy, and even admiration, at the progress of the country; what emotions must we not feel, when, from the point in which we stand, we also look back and run along the events of the century which has now closed? The country, which then, as we have seen, was thought deserving of a “noble name;” which then had “mightily increased,” and become “very populous;”

what was it, in comparison with what our eyes behold it? At that period, a very great proportion of its inhabitants lived in the Eastern section of Massachusetts proper, and in this colony. In Connecticut, there were towns along the coast, some of them respectable, but in the interior, all was a wilderness beyond Hartford. On Connecticut river, settlements had proceeded as far up as Deerfield, and fort Dummer had been built, near where is now the South line of New-Hampshire. In New-Hampshire, no settlement was then begun thirty miles from the mouth of Piscataqua river, and, in what is now Maine, the inhabitants were confined to the coast. The aggregate of the whole population of New-England did not exceed one hundred and sixty thousand. Its present amount is probably one million seven hundred thousand. Instead of being confined to its former limits, her population has rolled backward and filled up the spaces included within her actual local boundaries. Not this only, but it has overflowed those boundaries, and the waves of emigration have pressed, farther and farther, toward the west. The Alleghany has not checked it; the banks of the Ohio have been covered with it. New-England farms, houses, villages, and churches spread over, and adorn the immense extent from the Ohio to Lake Erie; and stretch along, from the Alleghany, onwards beyond the Miamies, and towards the Falls of St. Anthony. Two thousand miles westward from the rock where their fathers landed, may now be found the sons of

the Pilgrims; cultivating smiling fields, rearing towns and villages, and cherishing, we trust, the patrimonial blessings of wise institutions, of liberty, and religion. The world has seen nothing like this. Regions large enough to be empires, and which, half a century ago, were known only as remote and unexplored wildernesses, are now teeming with population, and prosperous in all the great concerns of life; in good governments, the means of subsistence, and social happiness. It may be safely asserted, that there are now more than a *million* of people, descendants of New-England ancestry, living free and happy, in regions, which hardly sixty years ago, were tracts of unpenetrated forest. Nor do rivers, or mountains, or seas resist the progress of industry and enterprise. Ere long, the sons of the Pilgrims will be on the shores of the Pacific. The imagination hardly keeps up with the progress of population, improvement, and civilization.

It is now five and forty years, since the growth and rising glory of America were portrayed, in the English parliament, with inimitable beauty, by the most consummate orator of modern times. Going back somewhat more than half a century, and describing our progress, as foreseen, from that point, by his amiable friend Lord Bathurst, then living, he spoke of the wonderful progress which America had made, during the period of a single human life. There is no American heart, I imagine, that does not glow, both with conscious patriotic pride, and admi-

ration for one of the happiest efforts of eloquence, so often as the vision, of "that little speck, scarce visible in the mass of national interest, a small seminal principle, rather than a formed body," and the progress of its astonishing development and growth, are recalled to the recollection. But a stronger feeling might be produced, if we were able to take up this prophetic description where he left it; and placing ourselves at the point of time in which he was speaking, to set forth with equal felicity, the subsequent progress of the country. There is yet among the living, a most distinguished and venerable name, a descendant of the Pilgrims; one who has been attended through life by a great and fortunate genius; a man illustrious by his own great merits, and favoured of Heaven in the long continuation of his years. The time when the English orator was thus speaking of America, preceded, but by a few days, the actual opening of the revolutionary Drama at Lexington. He to whom I have alluded, then at the age of forty, was among the most zealous and able defenders of the violated rights of his country. He seemed already to have filled a full measure of public service, and attained an honourable fame. The moment was full of difficulty and danger, and big with events of immeasurable importance. The country was on the very brink of a civil war, of which no man could foretel the duration or the result. Something more than a courageous hope, or characteristic ardour, would have been necessary to im-

press the glorious prospect on his belief, if, at that moment, before the sound of the first shock of actual war had reached his ears, some attendant spirit had opened to him the vision of the future; if it had said to him, "The blow is struck, and America is severed from England forever!" if it had informed him, that he himself, the next annual revolution of the sun, should put his own hand to the great Instrument of Independence, and write his name where all nations should behold it, and all time should not efface it; that ere long he himself should maintain the interest and represent the sovereignty of his new-born country, in the proudest courts of Europe; that he should one day exercise her supreme magistracy; that he should yet live to behold ten millions of fellow citizens paying him the homage of their deepest gratitude and kindest affections; that he should see distinguished talent and high public trust resting where his name rested; that he should even see with his own unclouded eyes, the close of the second century of New England; he who had begun life almost with its commencement, and lived through nearly half the whole history of his country; and that on the morning of this auspicious day, he should be found in the political councils of his native state, revising, by the light of experience, that system of government, which forty years before he had assisted to frame and establish; and great and happy as he should then behold his country, there should be nothing in prospect to cloud the scene,

nothing to check the ardour of that confident and patriotic hope, which should glow in his bosom to the end of his long protracted and happy life.

It would far exceed the limits of this discourse, even to mention the principal events in the civil and political history of New-England during the century; the more so, as for the last half of the period, that history has been, most happily, closely interwoven with the general history of the United States. New-England bore an honourable part in the wars which took place between England and France. The capture of Louisbourg gave her a character for military achievement; and in the war which terminated with the peace of 1763, her exertions on the frontiers were of most essential service as well to the mother country as to all the colonies.

In New-England the war of the revolution commenced. I address those who remember the memorable 19th of April 1775; who shortly after saw the burning spires of Charlestown; who beheld the deeds of Prescott, and heard the voice of Putnam amidst the storm of war, and saw the generous Warren fall, the first distinguished victim in the cause of liberty. It would be superfluous to say, that no portion of the country did more than the states of New-England, to bring the revolutionary struggle to a successful issue. It is scarcely less to her credit, that she saw early the necessity of a closer union of the states, and gave an efficient and

indispensible aid to the establishment and organization of the federal government.

Perhaps we might safely say, that a new spirit, and a new excitement began to exist here, about the middle of the last century. To whatever causes it may be imputed, there seems then to have commenced a more rapid improvement. The colonies had attracted more of the attention of the mother country, and some renown in arms had been acquired. Lord Chatham was the first English minister who attached high importance to these possessions of the crown, and who foresaw anything of their future growth and extension. His opinion was, that the great rival of England was chiefly to be feared as a maritime and commercial power, and to drive her out of North America and deprive her of her West India possessions, was a leading object in his policy. He dwelt often on the fisheries as nurseries for British seamen, and the colonial trade as furnishing them employment. The war, conducted by him with so much vigour, terminated in a peace, by which Canada was ceded to England. The effect of this was immediately visible in the New-England colonies; for the fear of Indian hostilities on the frontiers being now happily removed, settlements went on with an activity before that time altogether unprecedented, and public affairs wore a new and encouraging aspect. Shortly after this fortunate termination of the French war, the interesting topics connected with the taxation of America by the Bri-





tish Parliament began to be discussed, and the attention of all the faculties of the people drawn towards them. There is perhaps no portion of our history more full of interest than the period from 1760 to the actual commencement of the war. The progress of opinion, in this period, though less known, is not less important, than the progress of arms afterwards. Nothing deserves more consideration than those events and discussions which affected the public sentiment, and settled the Revolution in men's minds, before hostilities openly broke out.

Internal improvement followed the establishment, and prosperous commencement, of the present government. More has been done for roads, canals, and other public works, within the last thirty years, than in all our former history. In the first of these particulars, few countries excel the New-England States. The astonishing increase of their navigation and trade is known to every one, and now belongs to the history of our national wealth.

We may flatter ourselves, too, that literature and taste have not been stationary, and that some advancement has been made in the elegant, as well as in the useful arts.

The nature and constitution of society and government in this country, are interesting topics, to which I would devote what remains of the time allowed to this occasion. Of our system of government, the first thing to be said, is, that it is really and practically a free system. It originates entirely with the



people, and rests on no other foundation than their assent. To judge of its actual operation, it is not enough to look merely at the form of its construction. The practical character of government depends often on a variety of considerations, besides the abstract frame of its constitutional organization. Among these, are the condition and tenure of property; the laws regulating its alienation and descent; the presence or absence of a military power; an armed or unarmed yeomanry; the spirit of the age, and the degree of general intelligence. In these respects it cannot be denied, that the circumstances of this country are most favourable to the hope of maintaining the government of a great nation on principles entirely popular. In the absence of military power, the nature of government must essentially depend on the manner in which property is holden and distributed. There is a natural influence belonging to property, whether it exists in many hands or few; and it is on the rights of property, that both despotism and unrestrained popular violence ordinarily commence their attacks. Our ancestors began their system of government here, under a condition of comparative equality in regard to wealth, and their early laws were of a nature to favour and continue this equality.\* A republican form of govern-

\* The contents of several of the following pages will be found also in the printed account of the proceedings of the Massachusetts convention, in some remarks made by the author a few days before the delivery of this discourse. As those remarks were originally written for this discourse, it was thought proper not to omit them, in the publication, notwithstanding this circumstance.

ment rests, not more on political Constitutions, than on those laws which regulate the descent and transmission of property.—Governments like ours could not have been maintained, where property was holden according to the principles of the feudal system; nor, on the other hand, could the feudal Constitution possibly exist with us. Our New England ancestors brought hither no great capitals from Europe; and if they had, there was nothing productive, in which they could have been invested. They left behind them the whole feudal policy of the other continent. They broke away, at once, from the system of military service, established in the dark ages, and which continues, down even to the present time, more or less to affect the condition of property all over Europe. They came to a new country. There were, as yet, no lands yielding rent, and no tenants rendering service. The whole soil was unreclaimed from barbarism. They were themselves, either from their original condition, or from the necessity of their common interest, nearly on a general level, in respect to property. Their situation demanded a parcelling out and division of the lands; and it may be fairly said, that this necessary act *fixed the future frame and form of their government.* The character of their political institutions was determined by the fundamental laws respecting property. The laws rendered estates divisible among sons and daughters. The right of primogeniture, at first limited and curtailed, was

afterwards abolished. The property was all freehold. The entailment of estates, long trusts, and the other processes for fettering and tying up inheritances, were not applicable to the condition of society, and seldom made use of. On the contrary, alienation of the land was every way facilitated, even to the subjecting of it to every species of debt. The establishment of public registries, and the simplicity of our forms of conveyance, have greatly facilitated the change of real estate, from one proprietor to another. The consequence of all these causes has been, a great subdivision of the soil, and a great equality of condition; the true basis most certainly of a popular government.—“If the people,” says Harrington, “hold three parts in four of the territory, it is plain there can neither be any single person nor nobility able to dispute the government with them; in this case therefore, *except force be interposed*, they govern themselves.”

The history of other nations may teach us how favourable to public liberty is the division of the soil into small freeholds, and a system of laws, of which the tendency is, without violence or injustice, to produce and to preserve a degree of equality of property. It has been estimated, if I mistake not, that about the time of Henry the VII., four fifths of the land in England, was holden by the great barons and ecclesiastics. The effects of a growing commerce soon afterwards began to break in on this state of things, and before the revolution in 1688 a

vast change had been wrought. It may be thought probable, that, for the last half century, the process of subdivision in England, has been retarded, if not reversed; that the great weight of taxation has compelled many of the lesser freeholders to dispose of their estates, and to seek employment in the army and navy; in the professions of civil life; in commerce or in the colonies. The effect of this on the British Constitution cannot but be most unfavourable. A few large estates grow larger; but the number of those who have no estates also increases; and there may be danger, lest the inequality of property become so great, that those who possess it may be dispossessed by force; in other words that the government may be overturned.

A most interesting experiment of the effect of a subdivision of property on government, is now making in France. It is understood, that the law regulating the transmission of property, in that country, now divides it, real and personal, among all the children, equally, both sons and daughters; and that there is, also, a very great restraint on the power of making dispositions of property by will. It has been supposed, that the effects of this might probably be, in time, to break up the soil into such small subdivisions, that the proprietors would be too *poor* to resist the encroachments of executive power. I think far otherwise. What is lost in individual wealth, will be more than gained, in numbers, in intelligence, and in a sympathy of sentiment. If in-

deed, only one, or a few landholders were to resist the crown, like the barons of England, they must, of course, be great and powerful landholders with multitudes of retainers, to promise success. But if the proprietors of a given extent of territory are summoned to resistance, there is no reason to believe that such resistance would be less forcible, or less successful, because the number of such proprietors should be great. Each would perceive his own importance, and his own interest, and would feel that natural elevation of character which the consciousness of property inspires. A common sentiment would unite all, and numbers would not only add strength, but excite enthusiasm. It is true, that France possesses a vast military force, under the direction of an hereditary executive government; and military power, it is possible, may overthrow any government. It is, in vain, however, in this period of the world, to look for security against military power, to the arm of the great landholders. That notion is derived from a state of things long since past; a state in which a feudal baron, with his retainers, might stand against the sovereign, who was himself but the greatest baron, and his retainers. But at present, what could the richest landholder do, against one regiment of disciplined troops? Other securities, therefore, against the prevalence of military power must be provided. Happily for us, we are not so situated as that any purpose of national defence requires, ordinarily and constantly, such a military force as might seriously endanger our liberties.

In respect, however, to the recent law of succession in France, to which I have alluded, I would, presumptuously perhaps, hazard a conjecture, that if the government do not change the law, the law, in half a century, will change the government; and that this change will be not in favour of the power of the crown, as some European writers have supposed; but against it. Those writers only reason upon what they think correct general principles, in relation to this subject. They acknowledge a want of experience. Here we have had that experience; and we know that a multitude of small proprietors, acting with intelligence, and that enthusiasm which a common cause inspires, constitute not only a formidable, but an invincible power.

The true principle of a free and popular government would seem to be, so to construct it, as to give to all, or at least to a very great majority, an interest in its preservation: to found it, as other things are founded, on men's interest. The stability of government requires that those who desire its continuance should be more powerful than those who desire its dissolution. This power, of course, is not always to be measured by mere numbers.—Education, wealth, talents, are all parts and elements of the general aggregate of power; but numbers, nevertheless, constitute ordinarily the most important consideration, unless indeed there be a *military force*, in the hands of the few, by which they can controul the many. In this country we have actually existing

systems of government, in the maintenance of which, it should seem, a great majority, both in numbers and in other means of power and influence, must see their interest. But this state of things is not brought about solely by written political constitutions, or the mere manner of organizing the government; but also by the laws which regulate the descent and transmission of property. The freest government, if it could exist, would not be long acceptable, if the tendency of the laws were to create a rapid accumulation of property in few hands, and to render the great mass of the population dependent and pennyless. In such a case, the popular power would be likely to break in upon the rights of property, or else the influence of property to limit and controul the exercise of popular power.—Universal suffrage, for example, could not long exist in a community, where there was great inequality of property. The holders of estates would be obliged in such case, either, in some way, to restrain the right of suffrage; or else such right of suffrage would, long before, divide the property. In the nature of things, those who have not property, and see their neighbours possess much more than they think them to need, cannot be favourable to laws made for the protection of property. When this class becomes numerous, it grows clamorous. It looks on property as its prey and plunder, and is naturally ready, at all times, for violence and revolution.

It would seem, then, to be the part of political



wisdom, to found government on property; and to establish such distribution of property, by the laws which regulate its transmission and alienation, as to interest the great majority of society in the support of the government. This is, I imagine, the true theory and the actual practice of our republican institutions. With property divided, as we have it, no other government than that of a republic could be maintained, even were we foolish enough to desire it. There is reason, therefore, to expect a long continuance of our systems. Party and passion, doubtless, may prevail at times, and much temporary mischief be done. Even modes and forms may be changed, and perhaps for the worse. But a great revolution, in regard to property, must take place, before our governments can be moved from their republican basis, unless they be violently struck off by military power. The people possess the property, more emphatically than it could ever be said of the people of any other country, and they can have no interest to overturn a government which protects that property by equal laws.

Let it not be supposed, that this state of things possesses too strong tendencies towards the production of a dead and uninteresting level in society. Such tendencies are sufficiently counteracted by the infinite diversities in the characters and fortunes of individuals. Talent, activity, industry, and enterprise tend at all times to produce inequality and distinction; and there is room still for the accumula-

tion of wealth, with its great advantages, to all reasonable and useful extent. It has been often urged against the state of society in America, that it furnishes no class of men of fortune and leisure. This may be partly true, but it is not entirely so, and the evil, if it be one, would affect rather the progress of taste and literature, than the general prosperity of the people. But the promotion of taste and literature cannot be primary objects of political institutions; and if they could, it might be doubted, whether, in the long course of things, as much is not gained by a wide diffusion of general knowledge, as is lost by abridging the number of those whom fortune and leisure enable to devote themselves exclusively to scientific and literary pursuits. However this may be, it is to be considered that it is the spirit of our system to be equal, and general, and if there be particular disadvantages incident to this, they are far more than counterbalanced by the benefits which weigh against them. The important concerns of society are generally conducted, in all countries, by the men of business and practical ability; and even in matters of taste and literature, the advantages of mere leisure are liable to be overrated. If there exist adequate means of education, and the love of letters be excited, that love will find its way to the object of its desire, through the crowd and pressure of the most busy society.

Connected with this division of property, and the consequent participation of the great mass of people,

in its possession and enjoyments, is the system of representation, which is admirably accommodated to our condition, better understood among us, and more familiarly and extensively practised, in the higher and in the lower departments of government, than it has been with any other people. Great facility has been given to this in New-England by the early division of the country into townships or small districts, in which all concerns of local police are regulated, and in which representatives to the Legislature are elected. Nothing can exceed the utility of these little bodies. They are so many Councils, or Parliaments, in which common interests are discussed, and useful knowledge acquired and communicated.

The division of governments into departments, and the division, again, of the legislative department into two chambers, are essential provisions in our systems. This last, although not new in itself, yet seems to be new in its application to governments wholly popular. The Grecian Republics, it is plain, knew nothing of it; and in Rome, the check and balance of legislative power, such as it was, lay between the People and the Senate. Indeed few things are more difficult than to ascertain accurately the true nature and construction of the Roman Commonwealth. The relative power of the Senate and the People, the Consuls and the Tribunes, appears not to have been at all times the same, nor at any time accurately defined or strictly observed. Cicero, indeed, describes to us an admirable arrange-

ment of political power, and a balance of the constitution, in that beautiful passage, in which he compares the democracies of Greece with the Roman Commonwealth. “*O morem praeclarum, disciplinamque, quam a majoribus accepimus, si quidem teneremus! sed nescio quo pacto jam de manibus elabitur. Nullam enim illi nostri sapientissimi et sanctissimi viri vim concionis esse voluerunt, quae scisseret plebs, aut quae populus juberet; summota concione, distributis partibus, tributim, et centuriatim, descriptis ordinibus, classibus, ætatibus, auditis auctoribus, re multos dies promulgata et cognita, juberi vetarique voluerunt. Graecorum autem totae respublicae sedentis concionis temeritate administrantur.*”

But at what time this wise system existed in this perfection at Rome, no proofs remain to show. Her constitution, originally framed for a monarchy, never seemed to be adjusted, in its several parts, after the expulsion of the kings. Liberty there was, but it was a disputatious, an uncertain, an ill-secured liberty. The patrician and plebeian orders, instead of being matched and joined, each in its just place and proportion, to sustain the fabric of the state, were rather like hostile powers, in perpetual conflict. With us, an attempt has been made, and so far not without success, to divide representation into Chambers, and by difference of age, character, qualification or mode of election, to establish salutary checks, in governments altogether elective

Having detained you so long with these observations, I must yet advert to another most interesting topic, the FREE SCHOOLS. In this particular New-England may be allowed to claim, I think, a merit of a peculiar character. She early adopted and has constantly maintained the principle, that it is the undoubted right, and the bounden duty of government, to provide for the instruction of all youth. That which is elsewhere left to chance, or to charity, we secure by law. For the purpose of public instruction, we hold every man subject to taxation in proportion to his property, and we look not to the question, whether he himself have, or have not, children to be benefited by the education for which he pays. We regard it as a wise and liberal system of police, by which property, and life, and the peace of society are secured. We seek to prevent, in some measure, the extension of the penal code, by inspiring a salutary and conservative principle of virtue and of knowledge in an early age. We hope to excite a feeling of respectability, and a sense of character, by enlarging the capacity, and increasing the sphere of intellectual enjoyment. By general instruction, we seek, as far as possible, to purify the whole moral atmosphere; to keep good sentiments uppermost, and to turn the strong current of feeling and opinion, as well as the censures of the law, and the denunciations of religion, against immorality and crime. We hope for a security, beyond the law, and above the law, in the prevalence of enlightened and well prin-

cipléd moral sentiment. We hope to continue and prolong the time, when, in the villages and farm houses of New-England, there may be undisturbed sleep within unbarred doors. And knowing that our government rests directly on the public will, that we may preserve it, we endeavour to give a safe and proper direction to that public will. We do not, indeed, expect all men to be philosophers or statesmen; but we confidently trust, and our expectation of the duration of our system of government rests on that trust, that by the diffusion of general knowledge and good and virtuous sentiments, the political fabric may be secure, as well against open violence and overthrow, as against the slow but sure undermining of licentiousness.

We know, that at the present time, an attempt is making in the English Parliament to provide by law for the education of the poor, and that a gentleman of distinguished character, (Mr. Brougham) has taken the lead, in presenting a plan to government for carrying that purpose into effect. And yet, although the representatives of the three kingdoms listened to him with astonishment as well as delight, we hear no principles, with which we ourselves have not been familiar from youth; we see nothing in the plan, but an approach towards that system which has been established in New-England for more than a century and a half. It is said that in England, not more than *one child in fifteen* possesses the means of being taught to read and write; in Wales, *one in*

*twenty* ; in France, until lately, when some improvement has been made, not more than *one in thirty-five*. Now, it is hardly too strong to say, that in New-England, *every child possesses* such means. It would be difficult to find an instance to the contrary, unless where it should be owing to the negligence of the parent ;—and in truth the means are actually used and enjoyed by nearly every one. A youth of fifteen, of either sex, who cannot both read and write, is very unfrequently to be found. Who can make this comparison, or contemplate this spectacle, without delight and a feeling of just pride ? Does any history shew property more beneficently applied ? Did any government ever subject the property of those who have estates, to a burden, for a purpose more favourable to the poor, or more useful to the whole community ?

A conviction of the importance of public instruction was one of the earliest sentiments of our ancestors. No lawgiver of ancient or modern times has expressed more just opinions, or adopted wiser measures, than the early records of the Colony of Plymouth show to have prevailed here. Assembled on this very spot, a hundred and fifty-three years ago, the legislature of this Colony declared ; “ For as much as the maintenance of good literature doth much tend to the advancement of the weal and flourishing state of Societies and Republics, this Court doth therefore order, that in whatever township in this government, consisting of fifty families or up-

wards, any meet man shall be obtained to teach a grammar school, such township shall allow at least twelve pounds, to be raised by rate, on all the inhabitants."

Having provided, that all youth should be instructed in the elements of learning by the institution of Free Schools, our ancestors had yet another duty to perform. Men were to be educated for the professions, and the public. For this purpose they founded the University, and with incredible zeal and perseverance they cherished and supported it, through all trials and discouragements. On the subject of the University, it is not possible for a son of New-England to think without pleasure, nor to speak without emotion. Nothing confers more honour on the state where it is established, or more utility on the country at large. A respectable University is an establishment, which must be the work of time. If pecuniary means were not wanting, no new institution could possess character and respectability at once. We owe deep obligation to our ancestors, who began, almost on the moment of their arrival, the work of building up this institution.

Although established in a different government, the Colony of Plymouth manifested warm friendship for Harvard College. At an early period, its government took measures to promote a general subscription throughout all the towns in this Colony, in aid of its small funds. Other Colleges were subsequently founded and endowed, in other places, as the



ability of the people allowed; and we may flatter ourselves, that the means of education, at present enjoyed in New-England, are not only adequate to the diffusion of the elements of knowledge among all classes, but sufficient also for respectable attainments in literature and the sciences.

Lastly, our ancestors have founded their system of government on morality and religious sentiment. Moral habits, they believed, cannot safely be trusted on any other foundation than religious principle, nor any government be secure which is not supported by moral habits. Living under the heavenly light of revelation, they hoped to find all the social dispositions, all the duties which men owe to each other, and to society, enforced and performed. Whatever makes men good christians, makes them good citizens. Our fathers came here to enjoy their religion free and unmolested; and, at the end of two centuries, there is nothing upon which we can pronounce more confidently, nothing of which we can express a more deep and earnest conviction, than of the inestimable importance of that religion to man, both in regard to this life, and that which is to come.

If the blessings of our political and social condition have not now been too highly estimated, we cannot well over-rate the responsibility and duty which they impose upon us. We hold these institutions of government, religion, and learning, to be transmitted, as well as enjoyed. We are in the line of conveyance, through which whatever has been obtained by

the spirit and efforts of our ancestors, is to be communicated to our children.

We are bound to maintain public liberty, and by the example of our own systems, to convince the world, that order, and law, religion, and morality, the rights of conscience, the rights of persons, and the rights of property, may all be preserved and secured, in the most perfect manner, by a government entirely and purely elective. If we fail in this, our disaster will be signal, and will furnish an argument, stronger than has yet been found, in support of those opinions, which maintain that government can rest safely on nothing but power and coercion. As far as experience may show errors in our establishments, we are bound to correct them; and if any practices exist, contrary to the principles of justice and humanity, within the reach of our laws or our influence, we are inexcusable if we do not exert ourselves to restrain and abolish them.

I deem it my duty on this occasion to suggest, that the land is not wholly free from the contamination of a traffic, at which every feeling of humanity must forever revolt—I mean the African slave trade. Neither public sentiment, nor the law, has hitherto been able entirely to put an end to this odious and abominable trade. At the moment when God, in his mercy, has blessed the Christian world with an universal peace, there is reason to fear, that to the disgrace of the Christian name and character, new efforts are making for the extension of this trade, by subjects and citizens of Christian states, in whose

hearts no sentiment of humanity or justice inhabits, and over whom neither the fear of God nor the fear of man exercises a controul. In the sight of our law, the African slave trader is a pirate and a felon; and in the sight of heaven, an offender far beyond the ordinary depth of human guilt. There is no brighter part of our history, than that which records the measures which have been adopted by the government, at an early day, and at different times since, for the suppression of this traffic; and I would call on all the true sons of New-England, to co-operate with the laws of man, and the justice of heaven. If there be, within the extent of our knowledge or influence, any participation in this traffic, let us pledge ourselves here, upon the Rock of Plymouth, to extirpate and destroy it. It is not fit, that the land of the Pilgrims should bear the shame longer. I hear the sound of the hammer, I see the smoke of the furnaces where manacles and fetters are still forged for human limbs. I see the visages of those, who by stealth, and at midnight, labour in this work of hell, foul and dark, as may become the artificers of such instruments of misery and torture. Let that spot be purified, or let it cease to be of New-England. Let it be purified, or let it be set aside from the Christian world; let it be put out of the circle of human sympathies and human regards, and let civilized man henceforth have no communion with it.

I would invoke those who fill the seats of justice, and all who minister at her altar, that they execute the wholesome and necessary severity of the law. I

invoke the ministers of our religion, that they proclaim its denunciation of these crimes, and add its solemn sanctions to the authority of human laws. If the pulpit be silent, whenever, or wherever, there may be a sinner bloody with this guilt, within the hearing of its voice, the pulpit is false to its trust. I call on the fair merchant, who has reaped his harvest upon the seas, that he assist in scourging from those seas the worst pirates which ever infested them. That ocean, which seems to wave with a gentle magnificence to waft the burdens of an honest commerce, and to roll along its treasures with a conscious pride; that ocean, which hardy industry regards, even when the winds have ruffled its surface, as a field of grateful toil; what is it to the victim of this oppression, when he is brought to its shores, and looks forth upon it, for the first time, from beneath chains, and bleeding with stripes? What is it to him, but a wide spread prospect of suffering, anguish, and death? Nor do the skies smile longer, nor is the air longer fragrant to him. The sun is cast down from heaven. An inhuman and accursed traffic has cut him off in his manhood, or in his youth, from every enjoyment belonging to his being, and every blessing which his Creator intended for him.

The Christian communities send forth their emissaries of religion and letters, who stop, here and there along the coast of the vast continent of Africa, and with painful and tedious efforts, make some almost imperceptible progress in the communication

of knowledge, and in the general improvement of the natives who are immediately about them. Not thus slow and imperceptible is the transmission of the vices and bad passions which the subjects of Christian states carry to the land. The slave trade having touched the coast, its influence and its evils spread, like a pestilence, over the whole continent, making savage wars more savage, and more frequent, and adding new and fierce passions to the contests of barbarians.

I pursue this topic no further; except again to say, that all Christendom being now blessed with peace, is bound by every thing which belongs to its character, and to the character of the present age, to put a stop to this inhuman and disgraceful traffic.

We are bound not only to maintain the general principles of public liberty, but to support also those existing forms of government, which have so well secured its enjoyment, and so highly promoted the public prosperity. It is now more than thirty years that these States have been united under the Federal Constitution, and whatever fortune may await them hereafter, it is impossible that this period of their history should not be regarded as distinguished by signal prosperity and success. They must be sanguine, indeed, who can hope for benefit from change. Whatever division of the public judgment may have existed in relation to particular measures of the government, all must agree, one should think, in the opinion, that in its general course it has been eminently productive of public happiness. Its most

ardent friends could not well have hoped from it more than it has accomplished; and those who disbelieved or doubted ought to feel less concern about predictions, which the event has not verified, than pleasure in the good which has been obtained. Whoever shall hereafter write this part of our history, although he may see occasional errors or defects, will be able to record no great failure in the ends and objects of government. Still less will he be able to record any series of lawless and despotic acts, or any successful usurpation. His page will contain no exhibition of provinces depopulated, of civil authority habitually trampled down by military power, or of a community crushed by the burden of taxation. He will speak, rather, of public liberty protected, and public happiness advanced; of increased revenue, and population augmented beyond all example; of the growth of commerce, manufactures, and the arts; and of that happy condition, in which the restraint and coercion of government are almost invisible and imperceptible, and its influence felt only in the benefits which it confers. We can entertain no better wish for our own country than that this government may be preserved; nor have we a clearer duty than to maintain and support it in the full exercise of all its just constitutional powers.

The cause of science and literature also imposes upon us an important and delicate trust. The wealth and population of the country are now so far advanced, as to authorize the expectation of a correct literature, and a well formed taste, as well as respect-

able progress in the abstruse sciences. The country has risen from a state of colonial dependency; it has established an independent government, and is now in the undisturbed enjoyment of peace and political security. The elements of knowledge are universally diffused, and the reading portion of the community large. Let us hope that the present may be an auspicious era of literature. If, almost on the day of their landing, our ancestors founded schools and endowed colleges, what obligations do not rest upon us, living under circumstances so much more favourable both for providing and for using the means of education? Literature becomes free institutions. It is the graceful ornament of civil liberty, and a happy restraint on the asperities, which political controversy sometimes occasions. Just taste is not only an embellishment of society, but it rises almost to the rank of the virtues, and diffuses positive good throughout the whole extent of its influence. There is a connexion between right feeling and right principles, and truth in taste is allied with truth in morality. With nothing in our past history to discourage us, and with something in our present condition and prospects to animate us, let us hope, that as it is our fortune to live in an age when we may behold a wonderful advancement of the country in all its other great interests, we may see also equal progress and success attend the cause of letters.

Finally, let us not forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were brought hither by

their high veneration for the Christian Religion. They journeyed by its light, and laboured in its hope. They sought to incorporate its principles with the elements of their society, and to diffuse its influence through all their institutions, civil, political, or literary. Let us cherish these sentiments, and extend this influence still more widely; in the full conviction, that that is the happiest society, which partakes in the highest degree of the mild and peaceable spirit of Christianity.

The hours of this day are rapidly flying, and this occasion will soon be passed. Neither we nor our children can expect to behold its return. They are in the distant regions of futurity, they exist only in the all-creating power of God, who shall stand here, a hundred years hence, to trace, through us, their descent from the Pilgrims, and to survey, as we have now surveyed, the progress of their country, during the lapse of a century. We would anticipate their concurrence with us in our sentiments of deep regard for our common ancestors. We would anticipate and partake the pleasure with which they will then recount the steps of New-England's advancement. On the morning of that day, although it will not disturb us in our repose, the voice of acclamation and gratitude, commencing on the Rock of Plymouth, shall be transmitted through millions of the sons of the Pilgrims, till it lose itself in the murmurs of the Pacific seas.

We would leave for the consideration of those who shall then occupy our places, some proof that we hold the blessings transmitted from our fathers in



just estimation; some proof of our attachment to the cause of good government, and of civil and religious liberty; some proof of a sincere and ardent desire to promote every thing which may enlarge the understandings and improve the hearts of men. And when, from the long distance of an hundred years, they shall look back upon us, they shall know, at least, that we possessed affections, which running backward, and warming with gratitude for what our ancestors have done for our happiness, run forward also to our posterity, and meet them with cordial salutation, ere yet they have arrived on the shore of Being.

Advance, then, ye future generations! We would hail you, as you rise in your long succession, to fill the places which we now fill, and to taste the blessings of existence, where we are passing, and soon shall have passed, our own human duration. We bid you welcome to this pleasant land of the Fathers. We bid you welcome to the healthful skies, and the verdant fields of New-England. We greet your accession to the great inheritance which we have enjoyed. We welcome you to the blessings of good government, and religious liberty. We welcome you to the treasures of science, and the delights of learning. We welcome you to the transcendant sweets of domestic life, to the happiness of kindred, and parents, and children. We welcome you to the immeasurable blessings of rational existence, the immortal hope of Christianity, and the light of everlasting Truth!

## Appendix.

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The following is a list of the DISCOURSES delivered on this Anniversary.  
Those marked with an asterisk have not been printed.

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1769. First publicly noticed by the *Old Colony Club*.  
1770. EDWARD WINSLOW, jun. Esq. of *Plymouth*, an Oration.\*  
1771. (Lord's Day) the next day (23d) a public dinner.  
1772. Rev. CHANDLER ROBBINS, of *Plymouth*, on Ps. lxxviii. 6. 7.\*  
1773. Rev. CHARLES TURNER, *Duxbury*, Zeck. iv. 10.  
1774. Rev. GAD HITCHCOCK, *Pembroke*, Gen. i. 31.  
1775. Rev. SAMUEL BALDWIN, *Hanover*, Heb. xi. 8.  
1776. Rev. SYLVANUS CONANT, *Middleborough*, Exod. i. 12.  
1777. Rev. SAMUEL WEST, *Dartmouth*, Isai. lxvi. 5—9.  
1778. Rev. TIMOTHY HILLIARD, *Barnstable*\*  
1779. Rev. WILLIAM SHAW, *Marshfield*\*  
1780. Rev. JONATHAN MOORE, *Rochester*, Isai. xli. 10. 11.\*  
From this time the public observance of the day was suspended, till  
1794. Rev. CHANDLER ROBBINS, D.D. *Plymouth*, Psal. lxxvii. 11.  
1795.—1796.—1797. Private celebration.  
1798. Doct. ZACHEUS BARTLETT, *Plymouth*, an Oration.\*  
1799. The day was so near that appointed for the ordination of the Rev.  
Mr. KENDALL, that it was not celebrated by a public discourse.  
1800. JOHN DAVIS, Esq. *Boston*, an Oration.\*  
1801. Rev. JOHN ALLYN, *Duxbury*, Heb. xii. 2.  
1802. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Esq. *Boston*, an Oration.  
1803. Rev. JOHN T. KIRKLAND, D.D. *Boston*, Prov. xvii. 6.\*  
1804. (Lord's Day) Rev. JAMES KENDALL, of *Plymouth*, preached from  
Heb. xi. 13.\*  
1805. ALDEN BRADFORD, Esq. *Wiscasset*, Exod. xii. 14.  
1806. Rev. ABIEL HOLMES, D.D. *Cambridge*, Romans, ix. 5.  
1807. Rev. JAMES FREEMAN, *Boston*\*.  
1808. Rev. THADDEUS M. HARRIS, *Dorchester*, Ps. xlv. 1. 2. 3.  
1809. Rev. ABIEL ABBOTT, *Beverly*, Deut. xxxii. 11. 12.  
1810. Private celebration.  
1811. (Lord's Day) Rev. JOHN ELLIOT, D.D. *Boston*\*.  
1812.—1813.—1814. Private celebration.  
1815. Rev. JAMES FLINT, *Bridgewater*, Ps. xvi. 6.  
1816. (Lord's Day) Rev. EZRA GOODWIN, *Sandwich*, Isai. lx. 22.\*  
1817. Rev. HORACE HOLLEY, *Boston*\*.  
1818. WENDELL DAVIS, Esq. an Oration.\*  
1819. FRANCIS C. GRAY, Esq. *Boston*, an Oration.\*  
1820. Hon. DANIEL WEBSTER, *Boston*, an Oration.

MR. WEBSTER'S

**Speech**

ON

**THE GREEK REVOLUTION.**

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From the Washington Edition.

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# MR. WEBSTER'S SPEECH

ON THE

## Greek Revolution.

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ON the 8th of December, 1823, Mr. Webster presented, in the House of Representatives, the following resolution :

“ *Resolved*, That provision ought to be made, by law, for defraying the expense incident to the appointment of an Agent or Commissioner to Greece, whenever the President shall deem it expedient to make such appointment.”

The House having, on the 19th of January, resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole, and this resolution being taken into consideration, Mr. Webster spoke to the following effect :

I am afraid, Mr. Chairman, that, so far as my part in this discussion is concerned, those expectations which the public excitement, existing on the subject, and certain associations, easily connected with it, have conspired to raise, may be disappointed. An occasion which calls the attention to a spot, so distinguished, so connected with interesting recollections, as Greece, may naturally excite something of warmth and enthusiasm. In a grave, political discussion, however, it is necessary that that feeling should be chastised. I shall endeavour properly to repress it, although it is impossible that it should be altogether extinguished. We must, indeed, fly beyond the civilized world, we must pass the dominion of law, and the boundaries of knowledge ; we must, more especially, withdraw ourselves from this place, and the scenes

which here surround us, if we would separate ourselves, altogether, from the influence of all those memorials of herself which ancient Greece has transmitted for the admiration, and the benefit, of mankind. This free form of government, this popular assembly, the common council, held for the common good, where have we contemplated its earliest models? This practice of free debate, and public discussion, the contest of mind with mind, and that popular eloquence, which, if it were now here, on a subject like this, would move the stones of the Capitol, whose was the language in which all these were first exhibited? Even the Edifice in which we assemble, these proportioned columns, this ornamented architecture, all remind us that Greece has existed, and that we, like the rest of mankind, are greatly her debtors. But I have not introduced this motion in the vain hope of discharging any thing of this accumulated debt of centuries. I have not acted upon the expectation, that we, who have inherited this obligation from our ancestors, should now attempt to pay it, to those who may seem to have inherited, from *their* ancestors, a right to receive payment. My object is nearer and more immediate, I wish to take occasion of the struggle of an interesting and gallant people, in the cause of liberty and Christianity, to draw the attention of the House to the circumstances which have accompanied that struggle, and to the principles which appear to have governed the conduct of the great states of Europe, in regard to it; and to the effects and consequences of these principles, upon the independence of nations, and especially upon the institutions of free governments. What I have to say of Greece, therefore, concerns the modern, not the ancient; the living, and not the dead. It regards her, not as she exists in history, triumphant over time, and tyranny, and ignorance; but as she now is, contending, against fearful odds, for being, and for the common privilege of human nature.

As it is never difficult to recite commonplace remarks, and trite aphorisms; so it may be easy, I am aware, on this occasion, to remind me of the wisdom which dictates to men a

care of their own affairs, and admonishes them, instead of searching for adventures abroad, to leave other men's concerns in their own hands. It may be easy to call this resolution *Quixotic*, the emanation of a crusading or propagandist spirit. All this, and more, may be readily said ; but all this, and more, will not be allowed to fix a character upon this proceeding, until that is proved, which it takes for granted. Let it first be *shown*, that, in this question, there is nothing which can affect the interest, the character, or the duty of this country. Let it be proved, that we are not called upon, by either of these considerations, to express an opinion on the subject to which the resolution relates. Let this be proved, and then it will, indeed, be made out, that neither ought this resolution to pass, nor ought the subject of it to have been mentioned in the communication of the President to us. But, in my opinion, this cannot be shown. In my judgment, the subject is interesting to the people and the government of this country, and we are called upon, by considerations of great weight and moment, to express our opinions upon it. These considerations, I think, spring from a sense of our own duty, our character, and our own interest. I wish to treat the subject on such grounds, exclusively, as are truly *American* ; but then, in considering it as an American question, I cannot forget the age in which we live, the prevailing spirit of the age, the interesting questions which agitate it, and our own peculiar relation, in regard to these interesting questions. Let this be, then, and as far as I am concerned, I hope it will be, purely an American discussion ; but let it embrace, nevertheless, every thing that fairly concerns America ; let it comprehend, not merely her present advantage, but her permanent interest, her elevated character, as one of the free states of the world, and her duty towards those great principles, which have hitherto maintained the relative independence of nations, and which have, more especially, made her what she is.

At the commencement of the session, the President, in the discharge of the high duties of his office, called our attention to the subject, to which this resolution refers. "A strong hope,"

says that communication, “has been long entertained, founded on the heroic struggle of the Greeks, that they would succeed in their contest, and resume their equal station among the nations of the earth. It is believed that the whole civilized world takes a deep interest in their welfare. Although no power has declared in their favour, yet none, according to our information, has taken part against them. Their cause and their name have protected them from dangers, which might, ere this, have overwhelmed any other people. The ordinary calculations of interest, and of acquisition with a view to aggrandizement, which mingle so much in the transactions of nations, seem to have had no effect in regard to them. From the facts which have come to our knowledge, there is good cause to believe that their enemy has lost, for ever, all dominion over them : that Greece will become again an independent nation.”

It has appeared to me, that the House should adopt some resolution, reciprocating these sentiments, so far as it should approve them. More than twenty years have elapsed, since Congress first ceased to receive such a communication from the President, as could properly be made the subject of a general answer. I do not mean to find fault with this relinquishment of a former, and an ancient practice. It may have been attended with inconveniences which justified its abolition. But, certainly, there was one advantage belonging to it ; and that is, that it furnished a fit opportunity for the expression of the opinion of the Houses of Congress, upon those topics in the Executive communication, which were not expected to be made the immediate subjects of direct legislation. Since, therefore, the President’s message does not now receive a general answer, it has seemed to me to be proper, that in some mode, agreeable to our own usual form of proceeding, we should express our sentiments upon the important and interesting topics on which it treats.

If the sentiments of the message in respect to Greece be proper, it is equally proper that this House should reciprocate those sentiments. The present resolution is designed to have



that extent, and no more. If it pass, it will leave any future proceeding where it now is, in the discretion of the Executive Government. It is but an expression, under those forms in which the House is accustomed to act, of the satisfaction of the House with the general sentiments expressed in regard to this subject in the message, and of its readiness to defray the expense incident to any inquiry for the purpose of further information, or any other agency which the President, in his discretion, shall see fit, in whatever manner, and at whatever time, to institute. The whole matter is still left in his judgment, and this resolution can in no way restrain its unlimited exercise.

I might well, Mr. Chairman, avoid the responsibility of this measure, if it had, in my judgment, any tendency to change the policy of the country. With the general course of that policy, I am quite satisfied. The nation is prosperous, peaceful, and happy; and I should very reluctantly put its peace, prosperity, or happiness, at risk. It appears to me, however, that this resolution is strictly conformable to our general policy, and not only consistent with our interests, but even demanded by a large and liberal view of those interests.

It is certainly true, that the just policy of this country is in the first place, a peaceful policy. No nation ever had less to expect from forcible aggrandizement. The mighty agents which are working out our greatness, are time, industry, and the arts. Our augmentation is by growth, not by acquisition; by internal development, not by external accession. No schemes can be suggested to us, so magnificent as the prospects which a sober contemplation of our own condition, unaided by projects, uninfluenced by ambition, fairly spreads before us. A country of such vast extent, with such varieties of soil and climate; with so much public spirit and private enterprise; with a population increasing so much beyond former examples, with capacities of improvement not only unapplied or unexhausted, but even, in a great measure, as yet, unexplored; so free in its institutions, so mild in its laws, so secure in the title it confers on every man to his own

acquisitions ; needs nothing but time and peace to carry it forward to almost any point of advancement.

In the next place, I take it for granted, that the policy of this country, springing from the nature of our government, and the spirit of all our institutions, is, so far as it respects the interesting questions which agitate the present age, on the side of liberal and enlightened sentiments. The age is extraordinary ; the spirit that actuates it, is peculiar and marked ; and our own relation to the times we live in, and to the questions which interest them, is equally marked and peculiar. We are placed, by our good fortune, and the wisdom and valour of our ancestors, in a condition in which we *can* act no obscure part. Be it for honour, or be it for dishonour, whatever we do, is not likely to escape the observation of the world. As one of the free states among the nations, as a great and rapidly rising Republic, it would be impossible for us, if we were so disposed, to prevent our principles, our sentiments, and our example, from producing some effect upon the opinions and hopes of society throughout the civilized world. It rests probably with ourselves to determine, whether the influence of these shall be salutary or pernicious.

It cannot be denied that the great political question of this age is, that between absolute and regulated governments. The substance of the controversy is, whether society shall have any part in its own government. Whether the form of government shall be that of limited monarchy, with more or less mixture of hereditary power, or wholly elective, or representative, may perhaps be considered as subordinate. The main controversy is between that absolute rule, which, while it promises to govern well, means nevertheless to govern without control, and that regulated or constitutional system, which restrains sovereign discretion, and asserts that society may claim, as matter of right, some effective power in the establishment of the laws which are to regulate it. The spirit of the times sets with a most powerful current, in favour of these last mentioned opinions. It is opposed, however, whenever and wherever it shows itself, by certain of the great potentates

of Europe ; and it is opposed on grounds as applicable in one civilized nation as in another, and which would justify such opposition in relation to the United States, as well as in relation to any other state, or nation, if time and circumstance should render such opposition expedient.

What part it becomes this country to take on a question of this sort, so far as it is called upon to take any part, cannot be doubtful. Our side of this question is settled for us, even without our own volition. Our history, our situation, our character, necessarily decide our position and our course, before we have even time to ask whether we have an option. Our place is on the side of free institutions. From the earliest settlement of these States, their inhabitants were accustomed, in a greater or less degree, to the enjoyment of the powers of self-government ; and for the last half century, they have sustained systems of government entirely representative, yielding to themselves the greatest possible prosperity, and not leaving them without distinction and respect among the nations of the earth. This system we are not likely to abandon ; and while we shall no farther recommend its adoption to other nations, in whole or in part, than it may recommend itself by its visible influence on our growth and prosperity, we are, nevertheless, interested, to resist the establishment of doctrines which deny the legality of its foundations. We stand as an equal among nations, claiming the full benefit of the established international law ; and it is our duty to oppose, from the earliest to the latest moment, any innovations upon that code, which shall bring into doubt or question our own equal and independent rights.

I will now, Mr. Chairman, advert to those pretensions, put forth by the Allied Sovereigns of continental Europe, which seem to me calculated, if unresisted, to bring into disrepute the principles of our government, and indeed to be wholly incompatible with any degree of national independence. I do not introduce these considerations for the sake of topics. I am not about to declaim against crowned heads, nor to quarrel with any country for preferring a form of government dif-

ferent from our own. The choice that we exercise for ourselves, I am quite willing to leave also to others. But it appears to me that the pretensions of which I have spoken, are wholly inconsistent with the independence of nations generally, without regard to the question, whether their governments be absolute, monarchical and limited, or purely popular and representative. I have a most deep and thorough conviction, that a new era has arisen in the world, that new and dangerous combinations are taking place, promulgating doctrines, and fraught with consequences, wholly subversive, in their tendency, of the public law of nations, and of the general liberties of mankind. Whether this be so, or not, is the question which I now propose to examine, upon such grounds of information, as the common and public means of knowledge disclose.

Every body knows that, since the final restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of France, the continental powers have entered into sundry alliances, which have been made public, and have held several meetings or Congresses, at which the principles of their political conduct have been declared. These things must necessarily have an effect upon the international law of the states of the world. If that effect be good, and according to the principles of that law, they deserve to be applauded. If, on the contrary, their effect and tendency be most dangerous, their principles wholly inadmissible, their pretensions such as would abolish every degree of national independence, then they are to be resisted.

I begin, Mr. Chairman, by drawing your attention to the treaty, concluded at Paris in September, 1815, between Russia, Prussia, and Austria, commonly called the Holy Alliance. This singular alliance appears to have originated with the Emperor of Russia; for we are informed that a draft of it was exhibited by him, personally, to a plenipotentiary of one of the great powers of Europe, before it was presented to the other sovereigns who ultimately signed it.\* This instrument

\* Vide Lord Castlereagh's Speech in the House of Commons, February 3, 1816. Debates in Parliament, vol. 36, page 355; where also the Treaty may be found at length.

professes nothing, certainly, which is not extremely commendable and praiseworthy. It promises only that the contracting parties, both in relation to other states, and in regard to their own subjects, will observe the rules of justice and Christianity. In confirmation of these promises, it makes the most solemn and devout religious invocations. Now, although such an alliance is a novelty in European history, the world seems to have received this treaty, upon its first promulgation, with general charity. It was commonly understood as little or nothing more than an expression of thanks for the successful termination of the momentous contest, in which those sovereigns had been engaged. It still seems somewhat unaccountable, however, that these good resolutions should require to be confirmed by treaty. Who doubted that these august sovereigns would treat each other with justice, and rule their own subjects in mercy? And what necessity was there, for a solemn stipulation by treaty, to ensure the performance of that, which is no more than the ordinary duty of every government? It would hardly be admitted by these sovereigns, that, by this compact, they suppose themselves bound to introduce an entire change, or any change, in the course of their own conduct. Nothing substantially new, certainly, can be supposed to have been intended. What principle, or what practice, therefore, called for this solemn declaration of the intention of the parties to observe the rules of religion and justice?

It is not a little remarkable, that a writer of reputation upon the Public Law, described, many years ago, not inaccurately, the character of this alliance: I allude to Puffendorff. "It seems useless," says he, "to frame any pacts or leagues, barely for the defence and support of universal peace; for, by such a league nothing is superadded to the obligation of natural law, and no agreement is made for the performance of any thing, which the parties were not previously bound to perform; nor is the original obligation rendered firmer or stronger by such an addition. Men of any tolerable culture and civilization, might well be ashamed of entering into any such

compact, the conditions of which imply only that the parties concerned shall not offend in any clear point of duty. Besides, we should be guilty of great irreverence towards God, should we suppose that his injunctions had not already laid a sufficient obligation upon us to act justly, unless we ourselves voluntarily consented to the same engagement: as if our obligation to obey his will, depended upon our own pleasure.

“If one engage to serve another, he does not set it down expressly and particularly among the terms and conditions of the bargain, that he will not betray nor murder him, nor pillage nor burn his house. For the same reason, *that* would be a dishonourable engagement, in which men should bind themselves to act properly and decently, and not break the peace.”\*

Such were the sentiments of that eminent writer. How nearly he had anticipated the case of the Holy Alliance, will appear from comparing his observations with the preamble to that alliance, which is as follows :

“In the name of the most Holy and Indivisible Trinity, their Majesties the Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of Russia,”—“solemnly declare, that the present act has no other object than to publish, in the face of the whole world, their fixed resolution, both in the administration of their respective states, and in their political relations with every other government, to take for their sole guide the precepts of that holy religion, namely, the precepts of justice, christian charity, and peace, which, far from being applicable only to private concerns, must have an immediate influence on the councils of princes, and guide all their steps, as being the only means of consolidating human institutions, and remedying their imperfections.”

This measure, however, appears principally important, as it was the first of a series, and was followed afterwards by others of a more direct and practical nature. These measures, taken together, profess to establish two principles, which the Allied Powers would enforce as a part of the law of the

\* Book ii, cap. 2.

civilized world, and the enforcement of which is menaced by a million and a half of bayonets.

The first of these principles is, that all popular, or constitutional rights, are holden no otherwise than as grants from the crown. Society, upon this principle, has no rights of its own; it takes good government, when it gets it, as a boon and a concession, but can demand nothing. It is to live in that favour which emanates from royal authority, and if it have the misfortune to lose that favour, there is nothing to protect it against any degree of injustice and oppression. It can rightfully make no endeavour for a change, by itself; its whole privilege is to receive the favours that may be dispensed by the sovereign power, and all its duty is described in the single word, *submission*. This is the plain result of the principal continental state papers; indeed it is nearly the identical text of some of them.

The Laybach circular of May, 1821, alleges, "that useful and necessary changes in legislation and administration, ought only to emanate from the free will and intelligent conviction of those whom God has rendered responsible for power; all that deviates from this line necessarily leads to disorder, commotions, and evils, far more insufferable than those which they pretend to remedy."\* Now, Sir, this principle would carry Europe back again, at once, into the middle of the dark ages. It is the old doctrine of the divine right of kings, advanced now, by new advocates, and sustained by a formidable mass of power. That the people hold their fundamental privileges, as matter of *concession* or *indulgence*, from the sovereign power, is a sentiment not easy to diffuse in this age, any farther than it is enforced by the direct operation of military means. It is true, certainly, that some six centuries ago, the early founders of English liberty called the instrument which secured their rights a *Charter*; it was, indeed, a concession; they had obtained it, sword in hand, from the king; and, in many other cases, whatever was ob-

\* Annual Register, for 1821.

tained, favourable to human rights, from the tyranny and despotism of the feudal sovereigns, was called by the names of *privileges* and *liberties*, as being matter of special favour. And, though we retain this *language* at the present time, the principle itself belongs to ages that have long passed by us. The civilized world has done with the enormous faith of many made for one. Society asserts its own rights, and alleges them to be original, sacred, and unalienable. It is not satisfied with having kind masters; it demands a participation in its own government: and, in states much advanced in civilization, it urges this demand with a constancy and an energy, that cannot well, nor long, be resisted. There are, happily, enough of regulated governments in the world, and those among the most distinguished, to operate as constant examples, and to keep alive an unceasing panting in the bosoms of men, for the enjoyment of similar free institutions.

When the English revolution of 1688 took place, the English people did not content themselves with the example of Runnymede; they did not build their hopes upon royal charters; they did not, like the Laybach circular, suppose that all useful changes in constitutions and laws must proceed from those only whom God has rendered responsible for power. They were somewhat better instructed in the principles of civil liberty, or at least they were better lovers of those principles, than the sovereigns of Laybach. Instead of petitioning for charters, they *declared* their rights, and, while they offered to the family of Orange the crown with one hand, they held in the other an enumeration of those privileges which they did not profess to hold as favours, but which they *demand*ed and *insisted upon*, as their undoubted rights.

I need not stop to observe, Mr. Chairman, how totally hostile are these doctrines of Laybach, to the fundamental principles of *our* government. They are in direct contradiction: the principles of good and evil are hardly more opposite. If these principles of the sovereigns be true, we are but in a state of rebellion, or of anarchy, and are only tolerated among civilized nations, because it has not yet been convenient to conform us to the true standard.



But the second, and, if possible, the still more objectionable principle, avowed in these papers, is the right of forcible interference in the affairs of other states. A right to control nations in their desire to change their own government, wherever it may be conjectured, or pretended, that such change might furnish an *example* to the subjects of other states, is plainly and distinctly asserted. The same Congress that made the declaration at Laybach, had declared, before its removal from Troppau, "that the powers have an undoubted right to take a hostile attitude in regard to those states in which the overthrow of the government may operate as an example."

There cannot, as I think, be conceived a more flagrant violation of public law, or national independence, than is contained in this declaration.

No matter what be the character of the government resisted; no matter with what weight the foot of the oppressor bears on the neck of the oppressed; if he struggle, or if he complain, he sets a dangerous example of resistance,—and from that moment he becomes an object of hostility to the most powerful potentates of the earth. I want words to express my abhorrence of this abominable principle. I trust every enlightened man throughout the world will oppose it, and that especially, those who, like ourselves, are fortunately out of the reach of the bayonets that enforce it, will proclaim their detestation of it, in a tone both loud and decisive. The avowed object of such declarations is to preserve the peace of the world. But by what means is it proposed to preserve this peace? Simply, by bringing the power of all governments to bear against all subjects. Here is to be established a sort of double, or treble, or quadruple, or, for aught I know, a quintuple allegiance. An offence against one king is to be an offence against all kings, and the power of all is to be put forth for the punishment of the offender. A right to interfere in extreme cases, in the case of contiguous states, and where imminent danger is threatened to one by what is transpiring in another, is not without precedent in modern times, upon what has been called the law of vicinage; and when confin-

ed to extreme cases, and limited to a certain extent, it may perhaps be defended upon principles of necessity and self-defence. But to maintain that sovereigns may go to war upon the subjects of another state to *repress an example*, is monstrous indeed. What is to be the limit to such a principle, or to the practice growing out of it? What, in any case, but sovereign pleasure is to decide whether the example be good or bad? And what, under the operation of such a rule, may be thought of our *example*? Why are we not as fair objects for the operation of the new principle, as any of those who may attempt to reform the condition of their government, on the other side of the Atlantic?

The ultimate effect of this alliance of sovereigns, for objects personal to themselves, or respecting only the permanence of their own power, must be the destruction of all just feeling, and all natural sympathy, between those who exercise the power of government and those who are subject to it. The old channels of mutual regard and confidence are to be dried up, or cut off. Obedience can now be expected no longer than it is enforced. Instead of relying on the affections of the governed, sovereigns are to rely on the affections and friendship of other sovereigns. There are, in short, no longer to be nations. Princes and people no longer are to unite for interests common to them both. There is to be an end of all patriotism, as a distinct national feeling. Society is to be divided horizontally; all sovereigns above, and all subjects below; the former coalescing for their own security, and for the more certain subjection of the undistinguished multitude beneath. This, Sir, is no picture, drawn by imagination. I have hardly used language stronger than that in which the authors of this new system have commented on their own work. Mr. Chateaubriand, in his speech in the French Chamber of Deputies, in February last, declared, that he had a conference with the Emperor of Russia at Verona, in which that august sovereign uttered sentiments which appeared to him so precious, that he immediately hastened home, and wrote them down while yet fresh in his recollection. “*The*

*Emperor declared," said he, "that there can no longer be such a thing as an English, French, Russian, Prussian, or Austrian policy: there is henceforth but one policy, which, for the safety of all, should be adopted both by people and kings. It was for me first to show myself convinced of the principles upon which I founded the alliance; an occasion offered itself; the rising in Greece. Nothing certainly could occur more for my interests, for the interests of my people; nothing more acceptable to my country, than a religious war in Turkey: but I have thought I perceived in the troubles of the Morea, the sign of revolution, and I have held back. Providence has not put under my command 800,000 soldiers to satisfy my ambition, but to protect religion, morality, and justice, and to secure the prevalence of those principles of order on which human society rests. It may well be permitted that kings may have public alliances to defend themselves against secret enemies."*

These, Sir, are the words which the French minister thought so important as that they deserved to be recorded; and I too, Sir, am of the same opinion. But, if it be true that there is hereafter to be neither a Russian policy, nor a Prussian policy, nor an Austrian policy, nor a French policy, nor even, which yet I will not believe, an English policy; there will be, I trust in God, an *American* policy. If the authority of all these governments be hereafter to be mixed and blended, and to flow in one augmented current of prerogative, over the face of Europe, sweeping away all resistance in its course, it will yet remain for us to secure our own happiness, by the preservation of our own principles; which I hope we shall have the manliness to express on all proper occasions, and the spirit to defend in every extremity. The end and scope of this amalgamated policy is neither more nor less than this:—to interfere, *by force*, for any government, against any people who may resist it. Be the state of the people what it may, they shall not rise; be the government what it will, it shall not be opposed. The practical commentary has corresponded with the plain language of

the text. Look at Spain, and at Greece. If men may not resist the Spanish inquisition, and the Turkish scimitar, what is there to which humanity must not submit? Stronger cases can never arise. Is it not proper for us, at all times—is it not our duty, at this time, to come forth, and deny, and condemn, these monstrous principles. Where, but here, and in one other place, are they likely to be resisted? They are advanced with equal coolness and boldness; and they are supported by immense power. The timid will shrink and give way—and many of the brave may be compelled to yield to force. Human liberty may yet, perhaps, be obliged to repose its principal hopes on the intelligence and vigour of the Saxon race. As far as depends on us, at least, I trust those hopes will not be disappointed; and that, to the extent which may consist with our own settled, pacific policy, our opinions and sentiments may be brought to act, on the right side, and to the right end, on an occasion which is, in truth, nothing less than a momentous question between an intelligent age, full of knowledge, thirsting for improvement, and quickened by a thousand impulses, and the most arbitrary pretensions, sustained by unprecedented power.

This asserted right of forcible intervention, in the affairs of other nations, is in open violation of the public law of the world. Who has authorized these learned doctors of Tropaupau, to establish new articles in this code? Whence are their diplomas? Is the whole world expected to acquiesce in principles, which entirely subvert the independence of nations? On the basis of this independence has been reared the beautiful fabric of international law. On the principle of this independence, Europe has seen a family of nations, flourishing within its limits, the small among the large, protected not always by power, but by a principle above power, by a sense of propriety and justice. On this principle the great commonwealth of civilized states has been hitherto upheld. There have been occasional departures, or violations, and always disastrous, as in the case of Poland; but, in general, the harmony of the system has been wonderfully preserved. In the

production and preservation of this sense of justice, this predominating principle, the Christian religion has acted a main part. Christianity and civilization have laboured together ; it seems, indeed, to be a law of our human condition, that they can live and flourish only together. From their blended influence has arisen that delightful spectacle of the prevalence of reason and principle, over power and interest, so well described by one who was an honour to the age—

“ And sovereign *Law*, the *world's* collected will,  
 O'er thrones and globes elate,  
 Sits Empress—crowning good, repressing ill :  
 Smit by her sacred frown,  
 The fiend, *Discretion*, like a vapour, sinks,  
 And e'en the all-dazzling crown  
 Hides his faint rays, and at her bidding shrinks.”

But this vision is past. While the teachers of Laybach give the rule, there will be no law but the law of the strongest.

It may now be required of me to show what interest *we* have, in resisting this new system. What is it to *us*, it may be asked, upon what principles, or what pretences, the European governments assert a right of interfering in the affairs of their neighbours ? The thunder, it may be said, rolls at a distance. The wide Atlantic is between us and danger ; and, however others may suffer, *we* shall remain safe.

I think it a sufficient answer to this, to say, that we are one of the nations ; that we have an interest, therefore, in the preservation of that system of national law and national intercourse, which has heretofore subsisted, so beneficially for all. Our system of government, it should also be remembered, is, throughout, founded on principles utterly hostile to the new code ; and, if we remain undisturbed by its operation, we shall owe our security, either to our situation or our spirit. The enterprising character of the age, our own active commercial spirit, the great increase which has taken place in the intercourse between civilized and commercial states, have necessarily connected us with the nations of the earth, and given us a high concern in the preservation of those salutary

principles, upon which that intercourse is founded. We have as clear an interest in international law, as individuals have in the laws of society.

But, apart from the soundness of the policy, on the ground of direct interest, we have, Sir, a duty, connected with this subject, which, I trust, we are willing to perform. What do we not owe to the cause of civil and religious liberty? to the principle of lawful resistance? to the principle that society has a right to partake in its own government? As the leading Republic of the world, living and breathing in these principles, and advanced, by their operation, with unequalled rapidity, in our career, shall we give *our* consent to bring them into disrepute and disgrace? It is neither ostentation nor boasting, to say, that there lie before this country, in immediate prospect, a great extent and height of power. We are borne along towards this, without effort, and not always even with a full knowledge of the rapidity of our own motion. Circumstances which never combined before, have combined in our favour, and a mighty current is setting us forward, which we could not resist, even if we would, and which, while we would stop to make an observation, and take the sun, has set us, at the end of the operation, far in advance of the place where we commenced it. Does it not become us, then, is it not a duty imposed on us, to give our weight to the side of liberty and justice—to let mankind know that we are not tired of our own institutions—and to protest against the asserted power of altering, at pleasure, the law of the civilized world?

But whatever we do, in this respect, it becomes us to do upon clear and consistent principles. There is an important topic in the Message, to which I have yet hardly alluded. I mean the rumoured combination of the European continental sovereigns, against the new established free states of South America. Whatever position this government may take on that subject, I trust it will be one which can be defended, on known and acknowledged grounds of right. The near approach, or the remote distance of danger, may affect policy,

but cannot change principle. The same reason that would authorize us to protest against unwarrantable combinations to interfere between Spain and her former colonies, would authorize us equally to protest, if the same combination were directed against the smallest state in Europe, although our duty to ourselves, our policy, and wisdom, might indicate very different courses, as fit to be pursued by us in the two cases. We shall not, I trust, act upon the notion of dividing the world with the Holy Alliance, and complain of nothing done by them in their hemisphere, if they will not interfere with ours. At least this would not be such a course of policy as I could recommend or support. We have not offended, and, I hope, we do not intend to offend, in regard to South America, against any principle of national independence or of public law. We have done nothing, we shall do nothing, that we need to hush up or to compromise, by forbearing to express our sympathy for the cause of the Greeks, or our opinion of the course which other governments have adopted in regard to them.

It may, in the next place, be asked, perhaps, supposing all this to be true, what can *we* do? Are we to go to war? Are we to interfere in the Greek cause, or any other European cause? Are we to endanger our pacific relations?—No, certainly not. What, then, the question recurs, remains for *us*? If we will not endanger our own peace; if we will neither furnish armies, nor navies, to the cause which we think the just one, what is there within *our* power?

Sir, this reasoning mistakes the age. The time has been, indeed, when fleets, and armies, and subsidies, were the principal reliances even in the best cause. But, happily for mankind, there has come a great change in this respect. Moral causes come into consideration, in proportion as the progress of knowledge is advanced; and the *public opinion* of the civilized world is rapidly gaining an ascendancy over mere brutal force. It is already able to oppose the most formidable obstruction to the progress of injustice and oppression; and, as it grows more intelligent and more intense, it will be more

and more formidable. It may be silenced by military power, but it cannot be conquered. It is elastic, irrepressible, and invulnerable to the weapons of ordinary warfare. It is that impassible, unextinguishable enemy of mere violence and arbitrary rule, which, like Milton's angels,

" Vital in every part,  
" Cannot, but by annihilating, die."

Until this be propitiated or satisfied, it is vain for power to talk either of triumphs or of repose. No matter what fields are desolated, what fortresses surrendered, what armies subdued, or what provinces overrun. In the history of the year that has passed by us, and in the instance of unhappy Spain, we have seen the vanity of all triumphs, in a cause which violates the general sense of justice of the civilized world. It is nothing, that the troops of France have passed from the Pyrenees to Cadiz; it is nothing that an unhappy and prostrate nation has fallen before them; it is nothing that arrests, and confiscation, and execution, sweep away the little remnant of national resistance. There is an enemy that still exists to check the glory of these triumphs. It follows the conqueror back to the very scene of his ovations; it calls upon him to take notice that Europe, though silent, is yet indignant; it shows him that the sceptre of his victory is a barren sceptre; that it shall confer neither joy nor honour, but shall moulder to dry ashes in his grasp. In the midst of his exultation, it pierces his ear with the cry of injured justice, it denounces against him the indignation of an enlightened and civilized age; it turns to bitterness the cup of his rejoicing, and wounds him with the sting which belongs to the consciousness of having outraged the opinion of mankind.

In my own opinion, Sir, the Spanish nation is now nearer not only in point of time, but in point of circumstance, to the acquisition of a regulated government, than at the moment of the French invasion. Nations must, no doubt, undergo these trials in their progress to the establishment of free institutions. The very trials benefit them, and render them more capable both of obtaining and of enjoying the object which they seek.



I shall not detain the Committee, Sir, by laying before it any statistical, geographical, or commercial account of Greece. I have no knowledge on these subjects, which is not common to all. It is universally admitted, that within the last thirty or forty years, the condition of Greece has been greatly improved. Her marine is at present respectable, containing the best sailors in the Mediterranean, better even, in that sea, than our own, as more accustomed to the long quarantines, and other regulations which prevail in its ports. The number of her seamen has been estimated as high as 50,000, but I suppose that estimate must be much too large. They have probably 150,000 tons of shipping. It is not easy to state an accurate account of Grecian population. The Turkish government does not trouble itself with any of the calculations of political economy, and there has never been such a thing as an accurate census, probably, in any part of the Turkish empire. In the absence of all official information, private opinions widely differ. By the tables which have been communicated, it would seem that there are 2,400,000 Greeks in Greece Proper and the Islands; an amount, as I am inclined to think, somewhat overrated. There are, probably, in the whole of European Turkey, 5,000,000 Greeks, and 2,000,000 more in the Asiatic dominions of that power. The moral and intellectual progress of this numerous population, under the horrible oppression which crushes it, has been such as may well excite regard. Slaves, under barbarous masters, the Greeks have still aspired after the blessings of knowledge and civilization. Before the breaking out of the present revolution, they had established schools, and colleges, and libraries, and the press. Wherever, as in Scio, owing to particular circumstances, the weight of oppression was mitigated, the natural vivacity of the Greeks, and their aptitude for the arts, were discovered. Though certainly not on an equality with the civilized and Christian states of Europe, (and how is it possible under such oppression as they endured that they should be?) they yet furnished a striking contrast with their Tartar masters. It has been well said, that it is not easy to form a just conception

of the nature of the despotism exercised over them. Conquest and subjugation, as used among European states, are inadequate modes of expression by which to denote the dominion of the Turks. A conquest, in the civilized world, is generally no more than an acquisition of a new part to the conquering country. It does not imply a never-ending bondage imposed upon the conquered, a perpetual mark, and opprobrious distinction between them and their masters; a bitter and unending persecution of their religion; an habitual violation of their rights of person and property, and the unrestrained indulgence towards them, of every passion, which belongs to the character of a barbarous soldiery. Yet, such is the state of Greece. The Ottoman power over them, obtained originally by the sword, is constantly preserved by the same means. Wherever it exists, it is a mere military power. The religious and civil code of the state, being both fixed in the Alcoran, and equally the object of an ignorant and furious faith, have been found equally incapable of change. "The Turk," it has been said, "has been *encamped* in Europe for four centuries." He has hardly any more participation in European manners, knowledge, and arts, than when he crossed the Bosphorus. But this is not the worst of it. The power of the empire is fallen into anarchy, and as the principle which belongs to the head belongs also to the parts, there are as many despots as there are pachas, beys, and visiers. Wars are almost perpetual, between the sultan and some rebellious governor of a province; and in the conflict of these despotisms, the people are necessarily ground between the upper and the nether millstone. In short, the Christian subjects of the sublime Porte, feel daily all the miseries which flow from despotism, from anarchy, from slavery, and from religious persecution. If any thing yet remains to heighten such a picture, let it be added, that every office in the government is not only actually, but professedly, venal;—the pachalics, the visierates, the cadiships, and whatsoever other denomination may denote the depositary of power. In the whole world, Sir, there is no such oppression *felt*, as by

the Christian Greeks. In various parts of India, to be sure, the government is bad enough; but then it is the government of barbarians over barbarians, and the *feeling* of oppression is, of course, not so keen. There the oppressed are perhaps not better than their oppressors; but in the case of Greece, there are millions of Christian men, not without knowledge, not without refinement, not without a strong thirst for all the pleasures of civilized life, trampled into the very earth, century after century, by a pillaging, savage, relentless soldiery. Sir, the case is unique. There exists, and has existed, nothing like it. The world has no such misery to show; there is no case in which Christian communities can be called upon, with such emphasis of appeal.

But I have said enough, Mr. Chairman, indeed I need have said nothing to satisfy the House, that it must be some new combination of circumstances, or new views of policy in the cabinets of Europe, which have caused this interesting struggle not merely to be regarded with indifference, but to be marked with opprobrium. The very statement of the case, as a contest between the Turks and Greeks, sufficiently indicates what must be the feeling of every individual, and every government, that is not biassed by a particular interest, or a particular feeling, to disregard the dictates of justice and humanity.

And now, Sir, what has been the conduct pursued by the Allied Powers, in regard to this contest? When the revolution broke out, the sovereigns were in Congress at Laybach; and the papers of that assembly sufficiently manifest their sentiments. They proclaimed their abhorrence of those "criminal combinations which had been formed in the eastern parts of Europe;" and, although it is possible that this denunciation was aimed, more particularly, at the disturbances in the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia, yet no exception is made, from its general terms, in favour of those events in Greece, which were properly the commencement of her revolution, and which could not but be well known at Laybach, before the date of these declarations. Now it must be re-

membered, that Russia was a leading party in this denunciation of the efforts of the Greeks to achieve their liberation; and it cannot but be expected by Russia that the world shall also remember what part she herself has heretofore acted, in the same concern. It is notorious, that within the last half century she has again and again excited the Greeks to rebellion against the Porte, and that she has constantly kept alive in them the hope that she would, one day, by her own great power, break the yoke of their oppressor. Indeed, the earnest attention with which Russia has regarded Greece, goes much farther back than to the time I have mentioned. Ivan the Third, in 1482, having espoused a Grecian princess, heirless of the last Greek emperor, discarded *St. George* from the Russian arms, and adopted in its stead the *Greek two-headed black eagle*, which has continued in the Russian arms to the present day. In virtue of the same marriage, the Russian princes claimed the Greek throne as their inheritance.

Under Peter the Great, the policy of Russia developed itself more fully. In 1696, he rendered himself master of Azoph, and in 1698, obtained the right to pass the Dardanelles, and to maintain, by that route, commercial intercourse with the Mediterranean. He had emissaries throughout Greece, and particularly applied himself to gain the clergy. He adopted the *Labarum* of Constantine, "*In hoc signo vinces;*" and medals were struck, with the inscription, "*Petrus I. Russo-Græcorum Imperator.*" In whatever new direction the principles of the Holy Alliance may now lead the politics of Russia, or whatever course she may suppose Christianity now prescribes to her, in regard to the Greek cause, the time has been when she professed to be contending for that cause, as identified with Christianity. The white banner under which the soldiers of Peter the First usually fought, bore, as its inscription, "*In the name of the Prince, and for our country.*" Relying on the aid of the Greeks, in his war with the Porte, he changed the white flag to red, and displayed on it the words, "*In the name of God, and for Christianity.*" The unfortunate issue of this war is well known. Though Anne

and Elizabeth, the successors of Peter, did not possess his active character, they kept up a constant communication with Greece, and held out hopes of restoring the Greek empire. Catharine the Second, as is well known, excited a general revolt in 1769. A Russian fleet appeared in the Mediterranean, and a Russian army was landed in the Morea. The Greeks in the end were disgusted by being required to take an oath of allegiance to Russia, and the empress was disgusted because they refused to take it. In 1774, peace was signed between Russia and the Porte, and the Greeks of the Morea were left to their fate. By this treaty the Porte acknowledged the independence of the khan of the Crimea; a preliminary step to the acquisition of that country by Russia. It is not unworthy of remark, as a circumstance which distinguished this from most other diplomatic transactions, that it conceded the right to the cabinet of St. Petersburg, of intervention in the interior affairs of Turkey, in regard to whatever concerned the religion of the Greeks. The cruelties and massacres that happened to the Greeks after the peace between Russia and the Porte, notwithstanding the general pardon which had been stipulated for them, need not now be recited. Instead of retracing the deplorable picture, it is enough to say, that in this respect the past is justly reflected in the present. The empress soon after invaded and conquered the Crimea, and on one of the gates of Kerson, its capital, caused to be inscribed, "*The road to Byzantium.*" The present emperor, on his accession to the throne, manifested an intention to adopt the policy of Catharine II. as his own, and the world has not been right, in all its suspicions, if a project for the partition of Turkey did not form a part of the negotiations of Napoleon and Alexander at Tilsit.

All this course of policy seems suddenly to be changed. Turkey is no longer regarded, it would appear, as an object of partition or acquisition, and Greek revolts have, all at once, become, according to the declaration of Laybach, "criminal combinations." The recent congress at Verona exceeded its predecessor at Laybach, in its denunciations of the Greek struggle.

In the circular of the 14th of December, 1822, it declared the Grecian resistance to the Turkish power to be rash and culpable, and lamented that "the firebrand of rebellion had been thrown into the Ottoman empire." This rebuke and crimination we know to have proceeded on those settled principles of conduct, which the continental powers had prescribed for themselves. The sovereigns saw, as well as others, the real condition of the Greeks; they knew, as well as others, that it was most natural and most justifiable, that they should endeavour, at whatever hazard, to change that condition. They knew, that they, themselves, or at least one of them, had more than once urged the Greeks to similar efforts; that they, themselves, had thrown the same firebrand into the midst of the Ottoman empire. And yet, so much does it seem to be their fixed object to discountenance whatsoever threatens to disturb the actual government of any country, that, Christians as they were, and allied as they professed to be, for purposes most important to human happiness and religion, they have not hesitated to declare to the world, that they have wholly forborne to exercise any compassion to the Greeks, simply because they thought that they saw, in the struggles of the Morea, the sign of revolution. This, then, is coming to a plain, practical result. The Grecian revolution has been discouraged, discountenanced, and denounced, for no reason but because *it is a* revolution. Independent of all inquiry into the reasonableness of its causes, or the enormity of the oppression which produced it; regardless of the peculiar claims which Greece possesses upon the civilized world; and regardless of what has been their own conduct towards her for a century; regardless of the interest of the Christian religion, the sovereigns at Verona seized upon the case of the Greek revolution, as one above all others calculated to illustrate the fixed principles of their policy. The abominable rule of the Porte on one side, the valour and the sufferings of the Christian Greeks on the other, furnished a case likely to convince even an incredulous world of the sincerity of the pro-

fessions of the Allied Powers. They embraced the occasion with apparent ardour ; and the world, I trust, is satisfied.

We see here, Mr. Chairman, the direct and actual application of that system which I have attempted to describe. We see it in the very case of Greece. We learn, authentically and indisputably, that the Allied Powers, holding that all changes in legislation and administration ought to proceed from kings alone, were wholly inexorable to the sufferings of the Greeks, and wholly hostile to their success. Now it is upon this practical result of the principle of the continental powers, that I wish this House to intimate its opinion. The great question is a question of principle. Greece is only the signal instance of the application of that principle. If the principle be right, if we esteem it conformable to the law of nations, if we have nothing to say against it, or if we deem ourselves unfit to express an opinion on the subject, then, of course, no resolution ought to pass. If, on the other hand, we see in the declarations of the Allied Powers, principles not only utterly hostile to our own free institutions, but hostile also to the independence of all nations, and altogether opposed to the improvement of the condition of human nature ; if, in the instance before us, we see a most striking exposition and application of those principles, and if we deem our own opinions to be entitled to any weight in the estimation of mankind ; then, I think, it is our duty to adopt some such measure as the proposed resolution.

It is worthy of observation, Sir, that as early as July, 1821, Baron Strogonoff, the Russian minister at Constantinople, represented to the Porte, that, if the undistinguished massacres of the Greeks, both of such as were in open resistance, and of those who remained patient in their submission, were continued, and should become a settled habit, they would give just cause of war against the Porte to all Christian states. This was in 1821. It was followed, early in the next year, by that indescribable enormity, that appalling monument of barbarian cruelty, the destruction of Scio ; a scene I shall not attempt to describe ; a scene from which human nature

shrinks shuddering away ; a scene having hardly a parallel in the history of fallen man. This scene, too, was quickly followed by the massacres in Cyprus ; and all these things were perfectly known to the Christian powers assembled at Verona. Yet these powers, instead of acting upon the case supposed by Baron Strogonoff, and which, one would think, had been then fully made out ; instead of being moved by any compassion for the sufferings of the Greeks ; these powers, these Christian powers, rebuke their gallantry, and insult their sufferings, by accusing them of “ throwing a firebrand into the Ottoman empire.”

Such, Sir, appear to me to be the principles on which the continental powers of Europe have agreed hereafter to act ; and this, an eminent instance of the application of those principles.

I shall not detain the Committee, Mr. Chairman, by any attempt to recite the events of the Greek struggle, up to the present time. Its origin may be found, doubtless, in that improved state of knowledge, which, for some years, has been gradually taking place in that country. The emancipation of the Greeks has been a subject frequently discussed in modern times. They themselves are represented as having a vivid remembrance of the distinction of their ancestors, not unmixed with an indignant feeling, that civilized and Christian Europe should not, ere now, have aided them in breaking their intolerable fetters.

In 1816, a society was founded in Vienna, for the encouragement of Grecian literature. It was connected with a similar institution at Athens, and another in Thessaly, called the “Gymnasium of Mount Pelion.” The treasury and general office of the institution was established at Munich. No political object was avowed by these institutions, probably none contemplated. Still, however, they have, no doubt, had their effect in hastening that condition of things, in which the Greeks felt competent to the establishment of their independence. Many young men have been, for years, annually sent to the universities in the western states of Europe for



their education ; and, after the general pacification of Europe, many military men, discharged from other employment, were ready to enter even into so unpromising a service as that of the revolutionary Greeks.

In 1820, war commenced between the Porte and Ali, the well known pacha of Albania. Differences existed also with Persia, and with Russia. In this state of things, at the beginning of 1821, an insurrection appears to have broken out in Moldavia, under the direction of Alexander Ypsilanti, a well educated soldier, who had been major-general in the Russian service. From his character, and the number of those who seemed disposed to join him, he was supposed to be countenanced by the court of St. Petersburg. This, however, was a great mistake, which the emperor, then at Laybach, took an early opportunity to rectify. The Porte, it would seem, however, alarmed at these occurrences in the northern provinces, caused search to be made of all vessels entering the Black Sea, lest arms or other military means should be sent in that manner to the insurgents. This proved inconvenient to the commerce of Russia, and caused some unsatisfactory correspondence between the two powers. It may be worthy of remark, as an exhibition of national character, that, agitated by these appearances of intestine commotion, the sultan issued a proclamation, calling on all true musselmans to renounce the pleasures of social life, to prepare arms and horses, and to return to the manner of their ancestors, the life of the plains. The Turk seems to have thought that he had, at last, caught something of the dangerous contagion of European civilization, and that it was necessary to reform his habits, by recurring to the original manners of military, roving barbarians.

It was about this time, that is to say, at the commencement of 1821, that the Revolution burst out in various parts of Greece and the Isles. Circumstances, certainly, were not unfavourable, as one portion of the Turkish army was employed in the war against Ali Pacha in Albania, and another part in the provinces north of the Danube. The Greeks soon possessed themselves of the open country of the Morea, and

drove their enemy into the fortresses. Of these, that of Tripolitza, with the city, fell into the hands of the Greeks, in the course of the summer. Having after these first movements obtained time to breathe, it became, of course, an early object to establish a government. For this purpose delegates of the people assembled, under that name which describes the assembly in which we ourselves sit, that name which "freed the Atlantic," a *Congress*. A writer, who undertakes to render to the civilized world that service which was once performed by Edmund Burke, I mean the compiler of the English Annual Register, asks, *by what authority* this assembly could call itself a *Congress*. Simply, Sir, by the same authority, by which the people of the United States have given the same name to their own legislature. We, at least, should be naturally inclined to think, not only as far as names, but things also, are concerned, that the Greeks could hardly have begun their revolution under better auspices; since they have endeavoured to render applicable to themselves the general principles of our form of government, as well as its name. This constitution went into operation at the commencement of the next year. In the mean time, the war with Ali Pacha was ended, he having surrendered, and being afterwards assassinated, by an instance of treachery and perfidy, which, if it had happened elsewhere than under the government of the Turks, would have deserved notice. The negotiation with Russia, too, took a turn unfavourable to the Greeks. The great point upon which Russia insisted, beside the abandonment of the measure of searching vessels bound to the Black Sea, was, that the Porte should withdraw its armies from the neighbourhood of the Russian frontiers; and the immediate consequence of this, when effected, was to add so much more to the disposable force, ready to be employed against the Greeks. These events seemed to have left the whole force of the Empire, at the commencement of 1822, in a condition to be employed against the Greek rebellion; and, accordingly, very many anticipated the immediate destruction of their cause. The event, however, was ordered otherwise. Where

the greatest effort was made, it was met and defeated. Entering the Morea with an army which seemed capable of bearing down all resistance, the Turks were nevertheless defeated and driven back, and pursued beyond the isthmus, within which, as far as it appears, from that time to the present, they have not been able to set their foot.

It was in April, of this year, that the destruction of Scio took place. That island, a sort of appanage of the Sultana mother, enjoyed many privileges peculiar to itself. In a population of 130,000 or 140,000, it had no more than 2000 or 3000 Turks; indeed, by some accounts not near as many. The absence of these ruffian masters, had, in some degree, allowed opportunity for the promotion of knowledge, the accumulation of wealth, and the general cultivation of society. Here was the seat of the modern Greek literature; here were libraries, printing presses, and other establishments, which indicate some advancement in refinement and knowledge. Certain of the inhabitants of Samos, it would seem, envious of this comparative happiness of Scio, landed upon the island in an irregular multitude, for the purpose of compelling its inhabitants to make common cause with their countrymen against their oppressors. These, being joined by the peasantry, marched to the city, and drove the Turks into the castle. The Turkish fleet, lately reinforced from Egypt, happened to be in the neighbouring seas, and learning these events, landed a force on the island of 15,000 men. There was nothing to resist such an army. These troops immediately entered the city, and began an indiscriminate massacre. The city was fired; and, in four days, the fire and the sword of the Turk rendered the beautiful Scio a clotted mass of blood and ashes. The details are too shocking to be recited. Forty thousand women and children, unhappily saved from the general destruction, were afterwards sold in the market of Smyrna, and sent off into distant and hopeless servitude. Even on the wharves of our own cities, it has been said, have been sold the utensils of those hearths which now exist no longer. Of the whole population which I have mentioned, not above

900 persons were left living upon the island. I will only repeat, Sir, that these tragical scenes were as fully known at the Congress of Verona, as they are now known to us ; and it is not too much to call on the powers that constituted that Congress, in the name of conscience, and in the name of humanity, to tell us, if there be nothing even in these unparalleled excesses of Turkish barbarity, to excite a sentiment of compassion ; nothing which they regard as so objectionable as even the very idea of popular resistance to power.

The events of the year which has just passed by, as far as they have become known to us, have been even more favourable to the Greeks, than those of the year preceding. I omit all details, as being as well known to others as to myself. Suffice it to say, that with no other enemy to contend with, and no diversion of his force to other objects, the Porte has not been able to carry the war into the Morea ; and that, by the last accounts, its armies were acting defensively in Thessaly. I pass over also the naval engagements of the Greeks, although that is a mode of warfare in which they are calculated to excel, and in which they have already performed actions of such distinguished skill and bravery, as would draw applause upon the best mariners in the world. The present state of the war would seem to be, that the Greeks possess the whole of the Morea, with the exception of the three fortresses of Patras, Coron, and Modon ; all Candia but one fortress ; and most of the other islands. They possess the citadel of Athens, Missolunghi, and several other places in Livadia. They have been able to act on the offensive and to carry the war beyond the isthmus. There is no reason to believe their marine is weakened ; probably on the other hand, it is strengthened. But, what is most of all important, they have obtained time and experience. They have awakened a sympathy throughout Europe and throughout America ; and they have formed a government which seems suited to the emergency of their condition.

Sir, they have done much. It would be great injustice to

compare their achievements with our own. We began our revolution, already possessed of government, and, comparatively, of civil liberty. Our ancestors had, for centuries, been accustomed in a great measure to govern themselves. They were well acquainted with popular elections and legislative assemblies, and the general principles and practice of free governments. They had little else to do than to throw off the paramount authority of the parent state. Enough was still left, both of law and of organization, to conduct society in its accustomed course, and to unite men together for a common object. The Greeks, of course, could act with little concert at the beginning; they were unaccustomed to the exercise of power, without experience, with limited knowledge, without aid, and surrounded by nations, which, whatever claims the Greeks might seem to have had upon them, have afforded them nothing but discouragement and reproach. They have held out, however, for three campaigns; and that, at least, is something. Constantinople and the northern provinces have sent forth thousands of troops;—they have been defeated. Tripoli, and Algiers, and Egypt, have contributed their marine contingents;—they have not kept the ocean. Hordes of Tartars have crossed the Bosphorus;—they have died where the Persians died. The powerful monarchies in the neighbourhood have denounced their cause, and admonished them to abandon it, and submit to their fate. They have answered them, that, although two hundred thousand of their countrymen have offered up their lives, there yet remain lives to offer; and that it is the determination of *all*, “yes, of ALL,” to persevere until they shall have established their liberty, or until the power of their oppressors shall have relieved them from the burthen of existence.

It may now be asked, perhaps, whether the expression of our own sympathy, and that of the country, may do them good? I hope it may. It may give them courage and spirit, it may assure them of public regard, teach them that they are not wholly forgotten by the civilized world, and inspire them with constancy in the pursuit of their great end. At



any rate, Sir, it appears to me, that the measure which I have proposed is due to our own character, and called for by our own duty. When we shall have discharged that duty, we may leave the rest to the disposition of Providence.

I do not see how it can be doubted, that this measure is entirely *pacific*. I profess my inability to perceive that it has any possible tendency to involve our neutral relations. If the resolution pass, it is not, necessarily, to be immediately acted on. It will not be acted on at all, unless, in the opinion of the President, a proper and safe occasion for acting upon it shall arise. If we adopt the resolution to-day, our relations with every foreign state will be to-morrow precisely what they now are. The resolution will be sufficient to express our sentiments on the subjects to which I have adverted. Useful to that purpose, it can be mischievous to no purpose. If the topic were properly introduced into the Message, it cannot be improperly introduced into discussion in this House. If it were proper, which no one doubts, for the President to express his opinions upon it, it cannot, I think, be improper for us to express ours. The only certain effect of this resolution is to express, in a form usual in bodies constituted like this, our approbation of the general sentiment of the Message. Do we wish to withhold that approbation? *The Resolution confers on the President no new power, nor does it enjoin on him the exercise of any new duty; nor does it hasten him in the discharge of any existing duty.*

I cannot imagine that this resolution can add any thing to those excitements which it has been supposed, I think very causelessly, might possibly provoke the Turkish government to acts of hostility. There is already the Message, expressing the hope of success to the Greeks, and disaster to the Turks, in a much stronger manner than is to be implied from the terms of this resolution. There is the correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Greek Agent in London, already made public, in which similar wishes are expressed, and a continuance of the correspondence apparently invited. I might add to this, the unexampled burst of feeling

which this cause has called forth from all classes of society, and the notorious fact of pecuniary contributions made throughout the country for its aid and advancement. After all this, whoever can see cause of danger to our pacific relations from the adoption of this resolution, has a keener vision than I can pretend to. Sir, there is no augmented danger; there is *no danger*. The question comes at last to this, whether, on a subject of this sort, this House holds an opinion which is worthy to be expressed?

Even suppose, Sir, an Agent or Commissioner were to be immediately sent,—a measure which I myself believe to be the proper one,—there is no breach of neutrality, nor any just cause of offence. Such an agent, of course, would not be accredited; he would not be a public minister. The object would be inquiry and information; inquiry, which we have a right to make; information, which we are interested to possess. If a dismemberment of the Turkish empire be taking place, or has already taken place; if a new state be rising, or be already risen, in the Mediterranean, who can doubt, that, without any breach of neutrality, we may inform ourselves of these events, for the government of our own concerns?

The Greeks have declared the Turkish coasts in a state of blockade; may we not inform ourselves whether this blockade be *nominal* or *real*? and, of course, whether it shall be regarded or disregarded? The greater our trade may happen to be with Smyrna, a consideration which seems to have alarmed some gentlemen, the greater is the reason, in my opinion, why we should seek to be accurately informed of those events which may affect its safety.

It seems to me impossible, therefore, for any reasonable man to imagine, that this resolution can expose us to the resentment of the Sublime Porte.

As little reason is there for fearing its consequences upon the conduct of the Allied Powers. They may, very naturally, dislike our sentiments upon the subject of the Greek Revolution; but what those sentiments are, they will much more

explicitly learn in the President's Message than in this resolution. They might, indeed, prefer that we should express no dissent upon the doctrines which they have avowed, and the application which they have made of those doctrines to the case of Greece. But I trust we are not disposed to leave them in any doubt as to our sentiments upon these important subjects. They have expressed their opinions, and do not call that expression of opinion, *an interference*; in which respect they are right, as the expression of opinion, in such cases, is not such an *interference* as would justify the Greeks in considering the powers as at war with them. For the same reason, any expression which we may make, of different principles and different sympathies, is no *interference*. No one would call the President's Message an *interference*; and yet it is much stronger, in that respect, than this resolution. If either of them could be construed to be an *interference*, no doubt it would be improper, at least it would be so, according to my view of the subject: for the very thing which I have attempted to resist in the course of these observations, is the right of foreign interference. But neither the Message nor the resolution has that character. There is not a power in Europe that can suppose, that, in expressing our opinions on this occasion, we are governed by any desire of aggrandizing ourselves or of injuring others. We do no more than to maintain those established principles, in which we have an interest in common with other nations, and to resist the introduction of new principles and new rules, calculated to destroy the relative independence of states, and particularly hostile to the whole fabric of our own government.

I close, then, Sir, with repeating, that the object of this resolution is, to avail ourselves of the interesting occasion of the Greek revolution, to make our protest against the doctrines of the Allied Powers; both as they are laid down in principle, and as they are applied in practice.

I think it right too, Sir, not to be unseasonable in the expression of our regard, and, as far as that goes, in a ministration of our consolation, to a long oppressed and now struggling



people. I am not of those who would, in the hour of utmost peril, withhold such encouragement as might be properly and lawfully given, and when the crisis should be past, overwhelm the rescued sufferer with kindness and caresses. The Greeks address the civilized world with a pathos, not easy to be resisted. They invoke our favour by more moving considerations than can well belong to the condition of any other people. They stretch out their arms to the Christian communities of the earth, beseeching them, by a generous recollection of their ancestors, by the consideration of their own desolated and ruined cities and villages, by their wives and children, sold into an accursed slavery, by their own blood, which they seem willing to pour out like water, by the common faith, and in the Name, which unites all Christians, that they would extend to them, at least some token of compassionate regard.

THE END.



SPEECH

OF

MR. WEBSTER,

UPON

**The Tariff;**

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES,

APRIL, 1824.

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## SPEECH.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: I will avail myself of the present occasion to make some remarks on certain principles and opinions which have been recently advanced, and on those considerations which, in my judgment, ought to govern us in deciding upon the several and respective parts of this very important and complex measure. I can truly say that this is a painful duty. I deeply regret the necessity, which is likely to be imposed upon me, of giving a general affirmative or negative vote on the whole of the Bill. I cannot but think this mode of proceeding liable to great objections. It exposes both those who support, and those who oppose, the measure, to very unjust and injurious misapprehensions. There may be good reasons for favoring some of the provisions of the Bill, and equally strong reasons for opposing others; and these provisions do not stand to each other in the relation of principal and incident. If that were the case, those who are in favor of the principal might forego their opinions upon incidental and subordinate provisions. But the Bill proposes enactments entirely distinct, and different from one another, in character and tendency. Some of its clauses are intended merely for revenue; and, of those which regard the protection of home manufactures, one part stands upon very different grounds from those of other parts. So that probably every Gentleman who may ultimately support the bill will vote for much which his judgment does not approve; and those who oppose it will oppose something which they would very gladly support.

Being entrusted with the interests of a District highly commercial, and deeply interested in manufactures also, I wish to state my opinions on the present measure; not as on a whole, for it has no entire and homogeneous character; but as on a collection of different enactments, some of which meet my approbation, and some of which do not.

And allow me, sir, in the first place, to state my regret, if indeed I ought not to express a warmer sentiment, at the names, or designations, which Mr. Speaker has seen fit to adopt, for the purpose of describing the advocates and the opposers of the present Bill. It is a question, he says, between the friends of an "American policy," and those of a "foreign policy." This, sir, is an assumption which I take the liberty most directly to deny. Mr. Speaker certainly intended nothing invidious or derogatory to any part of the House by this mode of denominating friends and enemies. But there is power in names, and this manner of distinguishing those who favor and those who op-

pose particular measures, may lead to inferences to which no member of the House can submit. It may imply that there is a more exclusive and peculiar regard to American interests in one class of opinions than in another. Such an implication is to be resisted and repelled. Every member has a right to the presumption, that he pursues what he believes to be the interest of his country, with as sincere a zeal as any other member. I claim this in my own case; and, while I shall not, for any purpose of description, or convenient arrangement, use terms which may imply any disrespect to other men's opinions, much less any imputations of other men's motives, it is my duty to take care that the use of such terms by others be not, against the will of those who adopt them, made to produce a false impression. Indeed, sir, it is a little astonishing, if it seemed convenient to Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of distinction, to make use of the terms "American policy," and "foreign policy," that he should not have applied them in a manner precisely the reverse of that in which he has in fact used them. If names are thought necessary, it would be well enough, one would think, that the name should be, in some measure, descriptive of the thing; and since Mr. Speaker denominates the policy which he recommends "a new policy in this country;" since he speaks of the present measure as a new era in our legislation; since he professes to invite us to depart from our accustomed course, to instruct ourselves by the wisdom of others, and to adopt the policy of the most distinguished *foreign states*, one is a little curious to know with what propriety of speech this imitation of other nations is denominated an "American policy," while, on the contrary, a preference for our own established system, as it now actually exists, and always has existed, is called a "foreign policy." This favorite American policy is what America has never tried; and this odious foreign policy is what, as we are told, foreign states have never pursued. Sir, that is the truest American policy which shall most usefully employ American capital, and American labor, and best sustain the whole population. With me it is a fundamental axiom, it is interwoven with all my opinions, that the great interests of the country are united and inseparable; that agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, will prosper together, or languish together; and that all legislation is dangerous which proposes to benefit one of these without looking to consequences which may fall on the others.

Passing from this, sir, I am bound to say that Mr. Speaker began his able and impressive speech at the proper point of inquiry; I mean *the present state and condition of the country*; although I am so unfortunate, or rather although I am so happy, as to differ from him very widely in regard to that condition. I dissent entirely from the justice of that picture of distress which he has drawn. I have not seen the reality, and know not where it exists. Within my observation there is no cause for so gloomy and terrifying a representation. In respect to the New England states, with the condition of which I am, of course, most acquainted, the present appears to me a period of very general prosperity. Not, indeed, a time for great profits and

sudden acquisition; not a day of extraordinary activity and successful speculation. There is, no doubt, a considerable depression of prices, and, in some degree, a stagnation of business. But the case presented by Mr. Speaker was not one of *depression*, but of *distress*; of universal, pervading, intense distress, limited to no class, and to no place. We are represented as on the very verge and brink of national ruin. So far from acquiescing in these opinions, I believe there has been no period in which the general prosperity was better secured, or rested on a more solid foundation. As applicable to the Eastern states, I put this remark to their Representatives, and ask them if it is not true. When has there been a time in which the means of living have been more accessible and more abundant? when labor was rewarded, I do not say with a larger, but with a more certain success? Profits, indeed, are low; in some pursuits of life, which it is not proposed to benefit, but to *burden*, by this Bill, very low. But still I am unacquainted with any proofs of extraordinary distress. What, indeed, are the general indications of the state of the country? There is no famine nor pestilence in the land, nor war, nor desolation. There is no writhing under the burthen of taxation. The means of subsistence are abundant; and at the very moment when the miserable condition of the country is asserted, it is admitted that the wages of labor are high, in comparison with those of any other country. A country, then, enjoying a profound peace, a perfect civil liberty, with the means of subsistence cheap and abundant, with the reward of labor sure, and its wages higher than any where else, cannot be represented in gloom, melancholy, and distress, but by the effort of extraordinary powers of tragedy.

Even if, in judging of this question, we were to regard only those proofs to which we have been referred, we shall probably come to a conclusion somewhat different from that which has been drawn. Our exports, for example, although certainly less than in some years, were not, last year, so much below an average, formed upon the exports of a series of years, and putting those exports at a fixed value, as might be supposed. The exports of agricultural products, of animals, of the products of the forest, of the sea, together with gunpowder, spirits, and sundry unenumerated articles, amounted, in the several years, to the following sums, viz.

In 1790	-	-	-	-	\$27,716,152
1804	-	-	-	-	33,842,316
1807	-	-	-	-	38,465,854

Coming up, now, to our own times, and taking the exports of the years 1821, 1822, and 1823, of the same articles and products, at the same prices, they stand thus:

In 1821	-	-	-	-	\$45,643,175
1822	-	-	-	-	48,782,295
1823	-	-	-	-	55,863,491

Mr. Speaker has taken the very extraordinary year of 1803, and, adding to the exportation of that year, what he thinks ought to have

been a just augmentation, in proportion to the increase of our population, he swells the result to a magnitude, which, when compared with our actual exports, would exhibit a great deficiency. But is there any justice in this mode of calculation? In the first place, as before observed, the year 1803 was a year of extraordinary exportation. By reference to the accounts, that of the article of flour, for example, there was an export that year of 1,500,000 barrels; but the very next year it fell to 800,000, and the next year to 790,000. In the next place, there never was any reason to expect that the increase of our exports of agricultural products, would keep pace with the increase of our population. That would be against all experience. It is, indeed, most desirable, that there should be an augmented demand for the products of agriculture; but, nevertheless, the official returns of our exports do not show that absolute want of all foreign market, which has been so strongly stated.

But there are other means by which to judge of the general condition of the people. The quantity of the means of subsistence consumed; or, to make use of a phraseology better suited to the condition of our own people, the quantity of the comforts of life enjoyed, is one of those means. It so happens, indeed, that it is not so easy in this country, as elsewhere, to ascertain facts, of this sort, with accuracy. Where most of the articles of subsistence, and most of the comforts of life are taxed, there is, of course, great facility in ascertaining, from official statements, the amount of consumption. But, in this country, most fortunately, the Government neither knows, nor is concerned to know, the annual consumption; and estimates can only be formed in another mode, and in reference only to a few articles. Of these articles, tea is one. Its use is not quite a luxury, and yet is something above the absolute necessities of life. Its consumption, therefore, will be diminished in times of adversity, and augmented in times of prosperity. By deducting the annual export from the annual import, and taking a number of years together, we may arrive at a probable estimate of consumption. The average of eleven years, from 1790, to 1800, inclusive, will be found to be two millions and a half of pounds. From 1801 to 1812, inclusive, three millions seven hundred thousand; and the average of the last three years, to wit: 1821, 1822, and 1823, five millions and a half. Having made a just allowance for the increase of our numbers, we shall still find, I think, from these statements, that there is no distress which has limited our means of subsistence and enjoyment.

In forming an opinion of the degree of general prosperity, we may regard, likewise, the progress of internal improvements—the investment of capital in roads, bridges, and canals. All these prove a balance of income over expenditure; they are evidence that there is a surplus of profits, which the present generation is usefully vesting for the benefit of the next. It cannot be denied that, in this particular, the progress of the country is steady and rapid.

We may look, too, to the expenses of education. Are our Colleges deserted? Do fathers find themselves less able than usual to educate



their children? It will be found, I imagine, that the amount paid for the purpose of education, is constantly increasing, and that the schools and colleges were never more full than at the present moment. I may add that the endowment of public charities, the contributions to objects of general benevolence, whether foreign or domestic, the munificence of individuals towards whatever promises to benefit the community, are all so many proofs of national prosperity. And, finally, there is no defalcation of revenue, no pressure of taxation.

The general result, therefore, of a fair examination of the present condition of things, seems to me to be, that there is a considerable depression of prices, and curtailment of profit; and, in some parts of the country, it must be admitted, there is a great degree of *pecuniary* embarrassment, arising from the difficulty of paying debts which were contracted when prices were high. With these qualifications, the general state of the country may be said to be prosperous; and these are not sufficient to give to the whole face of affairs any appearance of general distress.

Supposing the evil, then, to be a depression of prices, and a partial pecuniary pressure, the next inquiry is into the causes of that evil; and it appears to me that there are several—and, in this respect, I think, too much has been imputed, by Mr. Speaker, to the single cause of the diminution of exports. Connected, as we are, with all the commercial nations of the world, and having observed great changes to take place elsewhere, we should consider whether the causes of those changes have not reached us, and whether we are not suffering by the operation of those causes, in common with others. Undoubtedly, there has been a great fall in the price of all commodities throughout the commercial world, in consequence of the restoration of a state of peace. When the Allies entered France in 1814, prices rose astonishingly fast and very high. Colonial produce, for instance, in the ports of this country, as well as elsewhere, sprung up suddenly from the lowest to the highest extreme. A new and vast demand was created for the commodities of trade. These were the natural consequences of the great political changes which then took place in Europe.

We are to consider, too, that our own war created new demand, and that a Government expenditure of 25,000,000, or 30,000,000 a year, had the usual effect of enhancing prices. We are obliged to add, that the paper issues of our Banks carried the same effect still further. A depreciated currency existed in a great part of the country; depreciated to such an extent as that, at one time, exchange between the centre and the north, was as high as 20 per cent. The Bank of the United States was instituted to correct this evil; but, for causes which it is not necessary now to enumerate, it did not for some years, bring back the currency of the country to a sound state. This depreciation of the circulating currency, was so much, of course, added to the nominal prices of commodities, and these prices thus unnaturally high, seemed, to those who looked only at the appearance, to indicate great prosperity. But such prosperity is more specious

than real. It would have been better, probably, as the shock would have been less, if prices had fallen sooner. At length, however, they fell; and, as there is little doubt that certain events in Europe had an influence in determining the time at which this fall should take place, I will advert shortly to some of the principal of those events.

In May, 1819, the British House of Commons decided, by an unanimous vote, that the resumption of cash payments by the Bank of England, should not be deferred beyond the ensuing February. The restriction had been continued from time to time, and from year to year, Parliament always professing to look to the restoration of a specie currency, whenever it should be found practicable. Having been, in July, 1818, continued to July, 1819, it was understood that, in the interim, the important question of the time at which cash payments should be resumed, should be finally settled. In the latter part of the year '18, the circulation of the Bank had been greatly reduced, and a severe scarcity of money was felt in the London market. Such was the state of things in England. On the continent, other important events took place. The French Indemnity Loan had been negotiated in the summer of 1818, and the proportion of it belonging to Austria, Russia, and Prussia, had been sold. This created an unusual demand for gold and silver in these Eastern States of Europe. It has been stated, that the amount of the precious metals transmitted to Austria and Russia in that year, was at least twenty millions sterling. Other large sums were sent to Prussia and to Denmark. The effect of this sudden drain of specie, felt first at Paris, was communicated to Amsterdam and Hamburg, and all other commercial places in the north of Europe.

The paper system of England had certainly communicated an artificial value to property. It had encouraged speculation, and excited overtrading. When the shock therefore came, and this violent pressure for money acted at the same moment on the continent and in England, inflated and unnatural prices could be kept up no longer. A reduction took place, which has been estimated to have been at least equal to a fall of 30, if not 40 per cent. The depression was universal; and the change was felt in the United States severely, though not equally so in every part of them. There are those, I am aware, who maintain that the events to which I have alluded did not cause the great fall of prices; but that that fall was natural and inevitable, from the previously existing state of things, the abundance of commodities, and the want of demand. But that would only prove that the effect was produced in another way, rather than by another cause. If these great and sudden calls for money did not reduce prices, but prices fell, as of themselves, to their natural state, still the result is the same; for we perceive that after these new calls for money, prices could not be kept longer at their unnatural height.

About the time of these foreign events, our own bank system underwent a change; and all these causes, in my view of the subject, concurred to produce the great shock which took place in our commercial cities, and through many parts of the country. The year 1819 was

a year of numerous failures, and very considerable distress, and would have furnished far better grounds than exist at present, for that gloomy representation of our condition which has been presented. Mr. Speaker has alluded to the strong inclination which exists, or has existed, in various parts of the country to issue paper money, as a proof of great existing difficulties. I regard it rather as a very productive cause of those difficulties; and the committee will not fail to observe, that there is, at this moment, much the loudest complaint of distress precisely where there has been the greatest attempt to relieve it by systems of paper credit. And, on the other hand, content, prosperity, and happiness, are most observable in those parts of the country, where there has been the least endeavor to administer relief by law. In truth, nothing is so baneful, so utterly ruinous to all true industry, as interfering with the legal value of money, or attempting to raise artificial standards to supply its place. Such remedies suit well the spirit of extravagant speculation, but they sap the very foundation of all honest acquisition. By weakening the security of property, they take away all motive for exertion. Their effect is to transfer property. Whenever a debt is allowed to be paid by any thing less valuable than the legal currency in respect to which it was contracted, the difference, between the value of the paper given in payment and the legal currency, is precisely so much property taken from one man and given to another, by legislative enactment. When we talk, therefore, of protecting industry, let us remember that the first measure for that end, is to secure it in its earnings; to assure it that it shall receive its own. Before we invent new modes of raising prices, let us take care that existing prices are not rendered wholly unavailable, by making them capable of being paid in depreciated paper. I regard, sir, this issue of irredeemable paper as the most prominent and deplorable cause of whatever pressure still exists in the country; and, further, I would put the question to the members of this committee, whether it is not from that part of the people who have tried this paper system, and tried it to their cost, that this Bill receives the most earnest support? And I cannot forbear to ask, further, whether this support does not proceed rather from a general feeling of uneasiness under the present condition of things, than from the clear perception of any benefit which the measure itself can confer? Is not all expectation of advantage centered in a sort of vague hope, that change may produce relief? Debt certainly presses hardest, where prices have been longest kept up by artificial means. They find the shock lightest, who take it soonest; and I fully believe that, if those parts of the country which now suffer most, had not augmented the force of the blow by deferring it, they would have now been in a much better condition than they are. We may assure ourselves, once for all, sir, that there can be no such thing as payment of debts by legislation. We may abolish debts indeed; we may transfer property, by visionary and violent laws. But we deceive both ourselves and our constituents, if we flatter, either ourselves or them, with the hope that there is any relief against whatever pressure exists, but in economy and industry. The depression of prices and the stagna-

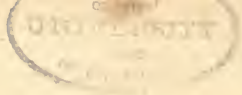
tion of business, have been in truth the necessary result of circumstances. No government could prevent them, and no government can altogether relieve the people from their effect. We had enjoyed a day of extraordinary prosperity; we had been neutral while the world was at war, and had found a great demand for our products, our navigation, and our labor. We had no right to expect that that state of things would continue always. With the return of peace, foreign nations would struggle for themselves, and enter into competition with us in the great objects of pursuit.

Now, sir, what is the remedy for existing evils? what is the course of policy suited to our actual condition? Certainly it is not our wisdom to adopt any system that may be offered to us without examination, and in the blind hope that whatever *changes* our condition may improve it. It is better that we should

“Bear those ills we have,  
“Than fly to others that we know not of.”

We are bound to see that there is a fitness and an aptitude in whatever measures may be recommended to relieve the evils that afflict us; and before we adopt a system that professes to make great alterations, it is our duty to look carefully to each leading interest of the community, and see how it may probably be affected by our proposed legislation.

And, in the first place, what is the condition of our commerce? Here we must clearly perceive, that it is not enjoying that rich harvest which fell to its fortune during the continuance of the European wars. It has been greatly depressed, and limited to small profits. Still, it is elastic and active, and seems capable of recovering itself in some measure from its depression. The shipping interest, also, has suffered severely, still more severely, probably, than commerce. If any thing should strike us with astonishment, it is that the navigation of the United States should be able to sustain itself. Without any government protection whatever, it goes abroad to challenge competition with the whole world; and, in spite of all obstacles, it has yet been able to maintain 800,000 tons in the employment of foreign trade. How, sir, do the ship owners and navigators accomplish this? How is it that they are able to meet, and in some measure overcome, universal competition? Not, sir, by protection and bounties; but by unwearied exertion, by extreme economy, by unshaken perseverance, by that manly and resolute spirit which relies on itself to protect itself. These causes alone enable American ships still to keep their element, and shew the flag of their country in distant seas. The rates of insurance may teach us how thoroughly our ships are built, and how skilfully and safely they are navigated. Risks are taken, as I learn, from the United States to Liverpool, at 1 per cent.; and from the United States to Canton and back, as low as 3 per cent. But when we look to the low rate of freight, and when we consider, also, that the articles entering into the composition of a ship, with the exception of wood, are dearer here than in other countries, we cannot but be utterly surprised, that the shipping interest has been able to sustain



itself at all. I need not say that the navigation of the country is essential to its honor, and its defence. Yet, instead of proposing benefit for it in this hour of its depression, we propose by this measure to lay upon it new and heavy burthens. In the discussion, the other day, of that provision of the bill which proposes to tax tallow for the benefit of the oil merchants and whalemen, we had the pleasure of hearing eloquent eulogiums upon that portion of our shipping employed in the whale fishery, and strong statements of its importance to the public interest. But the same Bill proposes a severe tax upon that interest, for the benefit of the iron manufacturer and the hemp grower. So that the tallow chandlers and soap boilers are sacrificed to the oil merchants, in order that these again may contribute to the manufacturers of iron and the growers of hemp.

If such be the state of our commerce and navigation, what is the condition of our home manufactures? How are they amidst the general depression? Do they need further protection? and if any, how much? On all these points, we have had much general statement, but little precise information. In the very elaborate speech of Mr. Speaker, we are not supplied with satisfactory grounds of judging in these various particulars. Who can tell, from any thing yet before the Committee, whether the proposed duty be too high or too low, on any one article? Gentleman tell us, that they are in favor of domestic industry; so am I. They would give it protection: so would I. But then all domestic industry is not confined to manufactures. The employments of agriculture, commerce, and navigation, are all branches of the same domestic industry; they all furnish employment for American capital, and American labor. And when the question is, whether new duties shall be laid, for the purpose of giving further encouragement to particular manufactures, every reasonable man must ask himself, both, whether the proposed new encouragement be necessary, and, whether it can be given without injustice to other branches of industry.

It is desirable to know, also, somewhat more distinctly, how the proposed means will produce the intended effect. One great object proposed, for example, is, the increase of the home market for the consumption of agricultural products. This certainly is much to be desired; but what provisions of the Bill are expected wholly, or principally to produce this, is not stated. I would not suggest that some increase of the home market may not follow, from the adoption of this Bill, but *all* its provisions have not an equal tendency to produce this effect. Those manufactures which employ most labor, create of course, most demand for articles of consumption; and those create least, in the production of which capital and skill enter as the chief ingredients of cost. I cannot, sir, take this Bill, merely because a Committee has recommended it. I cannot espouse a side, and fight under a flag. I wholly repel the idea, that we must take this law, or pass no law on the subject. What should hinder us from exercising our own judgments upon these provisions, singly and severally? Who has the power to place us, or why should we place ourselves, in a

condition where we cannot give to every measure, that is distinct and separate in itself, a separate and distinct consideration? Sir, I presume no member of the Committee will withhold his assent from what he thinks right, until others will yield their assent to what they think wrong. There are many things in this Bill, acceptable probably to the general sense of the House. Why should not these provisions be passed into a law, and others left to be decided upon their own merits, as a majority of the House shall see fit? To some of these provisions, I am myself decidedly favorable; to others, I have great objections; and I should have been very glad of an opportunity of giving my own vote distinctly on propositions, which are, in their own nature, essentially and substantially distinct from one another.

But, sir, before expressing my own opinion upon the several provisions of this Bill, I will advert for a moment to some other general topics. We have heard much of the policy of England, and her example has been repeatedly urged upon us, as proving, not only the expediency of encouragement and protection, but of exclusion and direct prohibition also. I took occasion the other day to remark, that more liberal notions were growing prevalent on this subject; that the policy of restraints and prohibitions was getting out of repute, as the true nature of commerce became better understood; and that, among public men, those most distinguished, were most decided in their reprobation of the broad principle of exclusion and prohibition. Upon the truth of this representation, as matter of fact, I supposed there could not be two opinions among those who had observed the progress of political sentiment in other countries, and were acquainted with its present state. In this respect, however, it would seem, that I was greatly mistaken. We have heard it again and again declared, that the English Government still adheres, with immovable firmness, to its old doctrines of prohibition; that although journalists, theorists, and scientific writers, advance other doctrines, yet the practical men, the legislators, the government of the country, are too wise to follow them. It has even been most sagaciously hinted, that the promulgation of liberal opinions on these subjects, is intended only for a delusion upon other nations, to cajole them into the folly of liberal ideas, while England retains to herself all the benefits of the admirable old system of prohibition. We have heard from Mr. Speaker a warm commendation of the complex mechanism of this system. The British Empire, it is said, is, in the first place, to be protected against the rest of the world; then the British isles against the colonies; next, the isles respectively against each other—England herself, as the heart of the empire, being protected most of all, and against all.

Truly, sir, it appears to me, that Mr. Speaker's imagination has seen system, and order, and beauty, in that, which is much more justly considered as the result of ignorance, partiality, or violence. This part of English legislation has resulted, partly from considering Ireland as a conquered country, partly from the want of a complete union, even with Scotland, and partly from the narrow views of colo-

nial regulation, which in early and uninformed periods, influenced the European states.

And, sir, I imagine, nothing would strike the public men of England more singularly, than to find gentlemen of real information, and much weight, in the councils of this country, expressing sentiments like these, in regard to the existing state of these English laws. I have never said, indeed, that prohibitory laws did not exist in England; we all know they do; but the question is, does she owe her prosperity and greatness to these laws? I venture to say, that such is not the opinion of the public men now in England, and the continuance of the laws, even without any alteration, would not be evidence that their opinion is different from what I have represented it; because the laws having existed long, and great interests having been built up on the faith of them, they cannot now be repealed, without great and overwhelming inconvenience. Because a thing has been wrongly done, it does not therefore follow that it can now be undone; and this is the reason, as I understand it, upon which exclusion, prohibition, and monopoly, are suffered to remain in any degree in the English system; and for the same reason, it will be wise in us to take our measures, on all subjects of this kind, with great caution. We may not be able, but at the hazard of much injury to individuals, hereafter to retrace our steps. And yet, whatever is extravagant; or unreasonable, is not likely to endure. There may come a moment of strong re-action; and if no moderation be shewn in laying on duties, there may be little scruple in taking them off. It may here be observed, that there is a broad and marked distinction between entire prohibition, and reasonable encouragement. It is one thing by duties or taxes on foreign articles, to awaken a home competition in the production of the same articles; it is another thing to remove all competition by a total exclusion of the foreign article; and it is quite another thing still, by total prohibition, to raise at home, manufactures not suited to the climate, the nature of the country, or the state of the population. These are substantial distinctions, and although it may not be easy in every case, to determine which of them applies to a given article, yet, the distinctions themselves exist, and in most cases, will be sufficiently clear to indicate the true course of policy; and, unless I have greatly mistaken the prevailing sentiment in the councils of England, it grows every day more and more favorable to the diminution of restrictions, and to the wisdom of leaving much (I do not say every thing, for that would not be true) to the enterprize and the discretion of individuals. I should certainly not have taken up the time of the Committee to state at any length the opinions of other governments, or of the public men of other countries, upon a subject like this; but an occasional remark made by me the other day, having been so directly controverted, especially by Mr. Speaker, in his observations yesterday, I must take occasion to refer to some proofs of what I have stated.

What, then, is the state of English opinion? Every body knows that, after the termination of the late European war, there came a time of

great pressure in England. Since her example has been quoted, let it be asked in what mode her government sought relief. Did it aim to maintain artificial and unnatural prices? Did it maintain a swollen and extravagant paper circulation? Did it carry further the laws of prohibition and exclusion? Did it draw closer the cords of colonial restraint? No, Sir, but precisely the reverse. Instead of relying on legislative contrivances and artificial devices, it trusted to the enterprise and industry of the people; which it sedulously sought to excite, not by imposing restraint, but by removing it, wherever its removal was practicable. In May, 1820, the attention of the government having been much turned to the state of foreign trade, a distinguished member\* of the House of Peers brought forward a parliamentary motion upon that subject, followed by an ample discussion, and a full statement of his own opinions. In the course of his remarks, he observed, "That there ought to be no prohibitory duties, as such; for that it was evident, that where a manufacture could not be carried on, or a production raised, but under the protection of a prohibitory duty, that manufacture, or that produce, could not be brought to market but at a loss. In his opinion, the name of strict prohibition might, therefore, in commerce, be got rid of altogether; but he did not see the same objection to protecting duties, which, while they admitted of the introduction of commodities from abroad similar to those which we ourselves manufactured, placed them so much on a level, as to allow a competition between them." "No axiom," he added, "was more true than this: that it was by growing what the territory of a country could grow most cheaply, and by receiving from other countries what it could not produce except at too great an expense, that the greatest degree of happiness was to be communicated to the greatest extent of population." In assenting to the motion, the first Minister† of the Crown expressed his own opinion of the great advantage resulting from unrestricted freedom of trade. "Of the soundness of that general principle," he observed, "I can entertain no doubt. I can entertain no doubt of what would have been the great advantages to the civilized world, if the system of unrestricted trade had been acted upon by every nation, from the earliest period of its commercial intercourse with its neighbors. If to those advantages there could have been any exceptions, I am persuaded that they would have been but few; and I am also persuaded that the cases, to which they would have referred, would not have been, in themselves, connected with the trade and commerce of England. But we are now in a situation in which, I will not say that a reference to the principle of unrestricted trade can be of no use, because such a reference may correct erroneous reasoning—but in which it is impossible for us, or for any country in the world, but the United States of America, to act unreservedly on that principle. The commercial regulations of the European

\* Lord Lansdowne. † Lord Liverpool.



" world have been long established, and cannot suddenly be departed  
 " from." Having supposed a proposition to be made to England, by  
 a foreign state, for free commerce and intercourse, and an unrestricted  
 exchange of agricultural products, and of manufactures, he proceeds  
 to observe: " It would be impossible to accede to such a proposition.  
 " We have risen to our present greatness under a different system.  
 " Some suppose that we have risen in consequence of that system;  
 " others, of whom I am one, believe that we have risen in SPITE OF  
 " THAT SYSTEM. But, whichever of these hypotheses be true, certain  
 " it is, that we have risen under a very different system than that of  
 " free and unrestricted trade. It is utterly impossible, with our debt  
 " and taxation, even if they were but half their existing amount, that  
 " we can suddenly adopt the system of free trade." Lord Ellenbo-  
 rough, in the same debate, said, " That he attributed the general dis-  
 " tress then existing in Europe, to the regulations that had taken  
 " place since the destruction of the French power. Most of the  
 " states on the continent had surrounded themselves as with walls of  
 " brass, to inhibit intercourse with other states. Intercourse was  
 " prohibited, even in districts of the same state, as was the case in  
 " Austria and Sardinia. Thus, though the taxes on the people had  
 " been lightened, the severity of their condition had been increased.  
 " He believed that the discontent which pervaded most parts of Eu-  
 " rope, and especially Germany, was more owing to commercial re-  
 " strictions, than to any theoretical doctrines on government; and  
 " that a free communication among them would do more to restore  
 " tranquillity, than any other step that could be adopted. He object-  
 " ed to all attempts to frustrate the benevolent intentions of Provi-  
 " dence, which had given to various countries various wants, in order  
 " to bring them together. He objected to it as antisocial; he object-  
 " ed to it, as making commerce the means of barbarising, instead of  
 " enlightening nations. The state of the trade with France was the  
 " most disgraceful to both countries; the two greatest civilized na-  
 " tions of the world, placed at a distance of scarcely twenty miles  
 " from each other, had contrived, by their artificial regulations, to re-  
 " duce their commerce with each other to a mere nullity." Every  
 member, speaking on this occasion, agreed in the general sentiments  
 favorable to unrestricted intercourse, which had thus been advanced;  
 one of them remarking, at the conclusion of the debate, that " the  
 " principles of free trade, which he was happy to see so fully recog-  
 " nized, were of the utmost consequence; for, though, in the present  
 " circumstances of the country, a free trade was unattainable, yet  
 " their task hereafter was to approximate to it. Considering the pre-  
 " judices and interests which were opposed to the recognition of that  
 " principle, it was no small indication of the firmness and liberality  
 " of government, to have so fully conceded it."

Sir, we have seen, in the course of this discussion, that several gen-  
 tlemen have expressed their high admiration of the *silk manufacture*  
 of England. Its commendation was begun, I think, by the honorable  
 member from Vermont, who sits near me, who thinks that that alone

gives conclusive evidence of the benefits produced by attention to manufactures, inasmuch as it is a great source of wealth to the nation, and has amply repaid all the cost of its protection. Mr. Speaker's approbation of this part of the English example, was still warmer. Now, Sir, it does so happen, that both these gentlemen differ very widely on this point, from the opinions entertained in England, by persons of the first rank, both of knowledge and of power. In the debate to which I have already referred, the proposer of the motion urged the expediency of providing for the admission of the silks of France into England. "He was aware," he said, "that there was a poor and industrious body of manufacturers, whose interests must suffer by such an arrangement; and therefore he felt that it would be the duty of Parliament to provide for the present generation, by a large parliamentary grant. It was conformable to every principle of sound justice to do so, when the interests of a particular class were sacrificed to the good of the whole." In answer to these observations, Lord Liverpool said that, with reference to several branches of manufactures, time, and the change of circumstances, had rendered the system of protecting duties merely nominal; and that, in his opinion, if all the protecting laws which regarded both the woollen and cotton manufactures, were to be repealed, no injurious effects would thereby be occasioned. "But," he observes, "with respect to silk, that manufacture in this kingdom is so completely artificial, that any attempt to introduce the principles of free trade with reference to it, might put an end to it altogether. I allow that the silk manufacture is not natural to this country. *I wish we had never had a silk manufactory.* I allow that it is natural to France; I allow, that it might have been better, had each country adhered exclusively to that manufacture, in which each is superior; and had the silks of France been exchanged for British cottons. But I must look at things as they are; and when I consider the extent of capital, and the immense population, consisting, I believe, of about 50,000 persons engaged in our silk manufacture, I can only say, that one of the few points in which I totally disagree with the proposer of the motion, is the expediency, under existing circumstances, of holding out any idea, that it would be possible to relinquish the silk manufacture, and to provide for those who live by it, by parliamentary enactment. Whatever objections there may be to the continuance of the protecting system, I repeat, that it is impossible altogether to relinquish it. I may regret that the system was ever commenced; but as I cannot recal that act, I must submit to the inconvenience by which it is attended, rather than expose the country to evils of greater magnitude." Let it be remembered, sir, that these are not the sentiments of a theorist, nor the fancies of speculation; but the operative opinions of the first minister of England, acknowledged to be one of the ablest and most practical statesmen of his country. Sir, gentlemen could have hardly been more unfortunate than in the selection of the silk manufacture in England, as an example of the beneficial effects of that system

which they would recommend. It is, in the language which I have quoted, completely artificial. It has been sustained by I know not how many laws, breaking in upon the plainest principles of general expediency. At the last session of Parliament, the manufacturers petitioned for the repeal of three or four of these statutes, complaining of the vexatious restrictions which they impose on the wages of labor; setting forth, that a great variety of orders has from time to time been issued by magistrates under the authority of these laws, interfering, in an oppressive manner, with the minutest details of the manufacture: such as limiting the number of threads to an inch; restricting the widths of many sorts of work; and determining the quantity of labor not to be exceeded without extra wages: that by the operation of these laws, the rate of wages, instead of being left to the recognized principles of regulation, has been arbitrarily fixed by persons whose ignorance renders them incompetent to a just decision; that masters are compelled by law to pay an equal price for all work, whether well or ill performed; and that they are totally prevented the use of improved machinery, it being ordered, that work, in the weaving of which machinery is employed, shall be paid precisely at the same rate as if done by hand; that these acts have frequently given rise to the most vexatious regulations, the unintentional breach of which has subjected manufacturers to ruinous penalties; and that, the introduction of all machinery being prevented, by which labor might be cheapened, and the manufacturers being compelled to pay at a fixed price, under all circumstances, they are prevented from affording employment to their workmen, in times of stagnation of trade, but are compelled to stop their looms. And finally, they complain, that, notwithstanding these grievances under which they labor, while carrying on their manufacture in London, the law still prohibits them, while they continue to reside there, from employing any portion of their capital in the same business in any other part of the kingdom, where it might be more beneficially conducted.— Now, sir, absurd as these laws must appear to be to every man, the attempt to repeal them did not, as far as I recollect, altogether succeed. The weavers were too numerous, their interests too great, or their prejudices too strong; and this notable instance of protection and monopoly still exists, to be lamented in England, with as much sincerity as it seems to be admired here.

In order further to shew the prevailing sentiment of the English government, I would refer to a report of a select committee of the House of Commons, at the head of which was the vice president of the board of trade, (Mr. Wallace) in July, 1820. “The time,” say that committee, “when monopolies could be successfully supported, or would be patiently endured, either in respect to subjects against subjects, or particular countries against the rest of the world, seems to have passed away. Commerce, to continue undisturbed and secure, must be, as it was intended to be, a source of reciprocal amity between nations, and an interchange of productions, to promote the industry, the wealth, and the happiness, of mankind.”

In moving for the re-appointment of the committee, in February, 1825, the same gentleman said; " We must also get rid of that feeling of appropriation, which exhibited itself in a disposition to produce every thing necessary for our own consumption, and to render ourselves independent of the world. No notion could be more absurd or mischievous; it led, even in peace, to an animosity and rancour, greater than existed in time of war. Undoubtedly there would be great prejudices to combat, both in this country and elsewhere, in the attempt to remove the difficulties which are most obnoxious. It would be impossible to forget the attention which was in some respects due to the present system of protections; although that attention ought certainly not to be carried beyond the absolute necessity of the case " And in a second report of the committee, drawn by the same gentleman, in that part of it which proposes a diminution of duties on timber from the north of Europe, and the policy of giving a legislative preference to the importation of such timber in the log, and a discouragement of the importation of deals, it is stated that the committee reject this policy, because, among other reasons, " it is founded on a principle of exclusion, which they are most averse to see brought into operation, in any *new instance*, without the warrant of some evident and great political expediency." And on many subsequent occasions, the same gentleman has taken occasion to observe, that he differed from those who thought that manufactures could not flourish without restrictions on trade; that old prejudices of that sort were dying away, and that more liberal and just sentiments were taking their place. These sentiments appear to have been followed by important legal provisions, calculated to remove restrictions and prohibitions, where they were most severely felt; that is to say, in several branches of navigation and trade.

They have relaxed their colonial system, they have opened the ports of their islands, and have done away the restriction which limited the trade of the colony to the mother country. Colonial products can now be carried directly from the islands to any part of Europe; and it may not be improbable, considering our own high duties on spirits, that that article may be exchanged hereafter by the English West India colonies, directly, for the timber and deals of the Baltic.

It may be added that Mr. Lowe, whom the gentleman has cited, says, that nobody supposes that the three great staples of English manufactures, cotton, woollen, and hardware, are benefitted by any existing protecting duties; and that one object of all these protecting laws is usually overlooked, and that is, that they have been intended to reconcile the various interests to taxation: the corn law, for example, being designed as some equivalent to the agricultural interest for the burden of tithes and of poor rates.

In fine, Sir, I think it is clear, that, if we now embrace the system of prohibitions and restrictions, we shall shew an affection for what others have discarded, and be attempting to ornament ourselves with cast off apparel.\*

\* Vide *NOTA* at end.

Sir, I should not have gone into this prolix detail of opinions from any consideration of their special importance on the present occasion; but, having happened to state, that such was the actual opinion of the government of England at the present time, and the accuracy of this representation having been so confidently denied, I have chosen to put the matter beyond doubt or cavil, although at the expense of these tedious citations. I shall have occasion, hereafter, of referring more particularly to sundry recent British enactments, by way of shewing the diligence and spirit with which that government strives to sustain its navigating interest, by opening the widest possible range to the enterprise of individual adventurers. I repeat, that I have not alluded to these examples of a foreign state as being fit to control our own policy. In the general principle, I acquiesce. Protection, when carried to the point which is now recommended, that is, to entire prohibition, seems to me, destructive of all commercial intercourse between nations. We are urged to adopt the system upon general principles; and what would be the consequence of the universal application of such a general principle, but that nations would abstain entirely from all intercourse with one another? I do not admit the general principle; on the contrary, I think freedom of trade to be the general principle, and restriction the exception. And it is for every state, taking into view its own condition, to judge of the propriety, in any case, of making an exception, constantly preferring, as I think all wise governments will, not to depart without urgent reason from the general rule.

There is another point in the existing policy of England, to which I would most earnestly invite the attention of the committee; I mean the warehouse system, or what we usually call the system of drawback. Very great prejudices appear to me to exist with us on that subject. We seem averse to the extension of the principle. The English government on the contrary, appear to have carried it to the extreme of liberality. They have, arrived, however at their present opinions, and present practice, by slow degrees. The transit system was commenced about the year 1803, but the first law was partial and limited. It admitted the importation of raw materials for exportation, but it excluded almost every sort of manufactured goods. This was done for the same reason that we propose to prevent the transit of Canadian wheat through the United States—the fear of aiding the competition of the foreign article with our own, in foreign markets. Better reflection, or more experience, has induced them to abandon that mode of reasoning, and to consider all such means of influencing foreign markets as nugatory: since, in the present active and enlightened state of the world, nations will supply themselves from the best sources, and the true policy of all producers, whether of raw materials, or of manufactured articles, is, not vainly to endeavor to keep other vendors out of the market, but to conquer them in it, by the quality and the cheapness of their articles. The present policy of England, therefore, is, to allure the importation of commo-

dities into England, there to be deposited in English warehouses, thence to be exported in assorted cargoes, and thus enabling her to carry on a general export trade to all quarters of the globe. Articles of all kinds, with the single exception of tea, may be brought into England, from any part of the world, in foreign as well as British ships, there warehoused, and again exported, at the pleasure of the owner, without the payment of any duty, or government charge whatever.

While I am upon this subject, I would take notice also of the recent proposition in the English Parliament to abolish the tax on imported wool; and it is observable, that those who support this proposition, give the same reasons as have been offered here, within the last week, against the duty which we propose on the same article. They say, that their manufacturers require a cheap and coarse wool, for the supply of the Mediterranean and Levant trade, and that, without a more free admission of the wool of the continent, that trade will all fall into the hands of the Germans and Italians, who will carry it on through Leghorn and Trieste. While there is this duty on foreign wool to protect the wool growers of England, there is on the other hand a prohibition on the exportation of the native article, in aid of the manufacturers. The opinion seems to be gaining strength, that the true policy is to abolish both.

Laws have long existed in England, preventing the emigration of artisans, and the exportation of machinery; but the policy of these, also, has become doubted, and an inquiry has been instituted in Parliament into the expediency of repealing them. As to the emigration of artisans, say those who disapprove the laws, if that were desirable, no law could effect it; and as to the exportation of machinery, let us fabricate and export it, as we would any other commodity. If France is determined to spin and weave her own cotton, let us, if we may, still have the benefit of furnishing the machinery.

I have stated these things, Sir, to shew what seems to be the general tone of thinking and reasoning on these subjects in that country, the example of which has been so much pressed upon us. Whether the present policy of England be right or wrong, wise or unwise, it cannot, as it seems clearly to me, be quoted as an authority for carrying further the restrictive and exclusive system, either in regard to manufactures or trade. To re-establish a sound currency, to meet at once the shock, tremendous as it was, of the fall of prices, to enlarge her capacity for foreign trade, to open wide the field of individual enterprize and competition, and to say, plainly and distinctly, that the country must relieve itself from the embarrassments which it felt, by economy, frugality, and renewed efforts of enterprize; these appear to be the general outline of the policy which England has pursued.

Mr. Chairman: I will say a few words upon a topic, but, for the introduction of which, into this debate, I should not have given the Committee, on this occasion, the trouble of hearing me. Some days

ago, I believe it was when we were settling the controversy between the oil merchants and the tallow chandlers, the *Balance of Trade* made its appearance in debate, and I must confess, Sir, that I spoke of it, or rather spoke to it, somewhat freely and irreverently. I believe I used the hard names which have been imputed to me; and I did it simply for the purpose of laying the spectre, and driving it back to its tomb. Certainly, Sir, when I called the old notion on this subject nonsense, I did not suppose that I should offend any one, unless the dead should happen to hear me. All the living generation, I took it for granted, would think the term very properly applied. In this, however, I was mistaken. The dead and the living rise up together to call me to account, and I must defend myself as well as I am able.

Let us inquire, then, Sir, what is meant by an unfavorable balance of trade, and what the argument is, drawn from that source. By an unfavorable balance of trade, I understand, is meant that state of things in which importation exceeds exportation. To apply it to our own case, if the value of goods imported, exceed the value of those exported, then the *balance of trade* is said to be against us, inasmuch as we have run in debt to the amount of this difference. Therefore, it is said, that, if a nation continue long in a commerce like this, it must be rendered absolutely bankrupt. It is in the condition of a man that buys more than he sells; and how can such a traffic be maintained without ruin? Now, Sir, the whole fallacy of this argument consists in supposing that, whenever the value of imports exceeds that, of exports, a debt is necessarily created to the extent of the difference: whereas, ordinarily, the import is no more than the result of the export, augmented in value by the labor of transportation. The excess of imports over exports, in truth, usually shows the gains, not the losses of trade; or, in a country that not only buys and sells goods, but employs ships in carrying goods also, it shows the profits of commerce, and the earnings of navigation. Nothing is more certain than that in the usual course of things, and taking a series of years together, the value of our imports is the aggregate of our exports and our freights. If the value of commodities, imported in a given case, did not exceed the value of the outward cargo, with which they were purchased, then it would be clear to every man's common sense, that the voyage had not been profitable: If such commodities fell far short in value of the cost of the outward cargo, then the voyage would be a very losing one; and yet it would present exactly that state of things, which, according to the notion of a *balance of trade*, can alone indicate a prosperous commerce. On the other hand, if the return cargo were found to be worth much more than the outward cargo, while the merchant, having paid for the goods exported, and all the expenses of the voyage, finds a handsome sum yet in his hands, which he calls profits, the *balance of trade* is still against him, and whatever he may think of it, he is in a very bad way. Although one individual, or all individuals gain, the nation loses; while all its citizens grow rich, the country grows poor. This is the doctrine of the *balance of*

*trade.* Allow me, Sir, to give an instance tending to shew how unaccountably individuals deceive themselves, and imagine themselves to be somewhat rapidly mending their condition, while they ought to be persuaded that, by that infallible standard, *the balance of trade*, they are on the high road to ruin. Some years ago, in better times than the present, a ship left one of the towns of New England with 70,000 specie dollars. She proceeded to Mocha, on the Red Sea, and there laid out these dollars in coffee, drugs, spices, &c. With this new cargo she proceeded to Europe; two-thirds of it were sold in Holland for \$130,000, which the ship brought back, and placed in the same Bank, from the vaults of which she had taken her original outfit. The other third was sent to the ports of the Mediterranean, and produced a return of 25,000 dollars in specie, and 15,000 dollars in Italian merchandise. These sums together make 170,000 dollars imported, which is 100,000 dollars more than was exported, and is therefore proof of an unfavorable *balance of trade*, to that amount, in this adventure. We should find no great difficulty, Sir, in paying off our balances if this were the nature of them all.

The truth is, Mr. Chairman, that all these obsolete and exploded notions had their origin in very mistaken ideas of the true nature of commerce. Commerce is not a gambling among nations for a stake, to be won by some and lost by others. It has not the tendency necessarily to impoverish one of the parties to it, while it enriches the other; all parties gain, all parties make profits, all parties grow rich, by the operations of just and liberal commerce. If the world had but one clime, and but one soil; if all men had the same wants and the same means, on the spot of their existence, to gratify those wants; then, indeed, what one obtained from the other by exchange, would injure one party in the same degree that it benefitted the other; then, indeed, there would be some foundation for the *balance of trade*. But Providence has disposed our lot much more kindly. We inhabit a various earth. We have reciprocal wants, and reciprocal means for gratifying one another's wants. This is the true origin of commerce, which is nothing more than an exchange of equivalents, and from the rude barter of its primitive state, to the refined and complex state in which we see it, its principle is uniformly the same; its only object being, in every stage, to produce that exchange of commodities between individuals and between nations, which shall conduce to the advantage and to the happiness of both. Commerce between nations has the same essential character, as commerce between individuals, or between parts of the same nation. Cannot two individuals make an interchange of commodities which shall prove beneficial to both, or in which the *balance of trade* shall be in favor of both? If not, the tailor and the shoemaker, the farmer and the smith, have hitherto very much misunderstood their own interest. And with regard to the internal trade of a country, in which the same rule would apply as between nations, do we ever speak of such an intercourse being prejudicial to one side because it is useful to the other? Do we ever hear



that, because the intercourse between New York and Albany is advantageous to one of those places, it must therefore be ruinous to the other?

May I be allowed, sir, to read a passage on this subject from the observations of a gentleman, in my opinion one of the most clear and sensible writers and speakers of the age upon subjects of this sort? "There is no political question on which the prevalence of false principles is so general, as in what relates to the nature of commerce and to the pretended *balance of trade*; and there are few which have led to a greater number of practical mistakes, attended with consequences extensively prejudicial to the happiness of mankind. In this country, our parliamentary proceedings, our public documents, and the works of several able and popular writers, have combined to propagate the impression that we are indebted for much of our riches to what is called *the balance of trade*." "Our true policy would surely be to profess, as the object and guide of our commercial system, that which every man who has studied the subject, must know to be the true principle of commerce, *the interchange of reciprocal and equivalent benefit*. We may rest assured that it is not in the nature of commerce to enrich one party at the expense of the other. This is a purpose at which, if it were practicable, we ought not to aim; and which, if we aimed at, we could not accomplish." These remarks, I believe, sir, were written some ten or twelve years ago. They are in perfect accordance with the opinions advanced in more elaborate treatises, and now that the world has returned to a state of peace, and commerce has resumed its natural channels, and different nations are enjoying, or seeking to enjoy, their respective portions of it, all see the justness of these ideas; all see, that, in this day of knowledge and of peace, there can be no commerce between nations but that which shall benefit all who are parties to it.

If it were necessary, Mr. Chairman, I might ask the attention of the committee to recur to a document before us, on this subject, of the *balance of trade*. It will be seen by reference to the accounts, that, in the course of the last year, our total export to Holland exceeded two millions and a half; our total import from the same country was but 700,000 dollars. Now can any man be wild enough to make any inference from this of the gain or loss of our trade with Holland for that year? Our trade with Russia for the same year, produced a balance the other way; our import being two millions, and our export but half a million. But this has no more tendency to shew the Russian trade a losing trade, than the other statement has to shew that the Dutch trade has been a gainful one. Neither of them, by itself, proves any thing.

Springing out of this notion of a *balance of trade*, there has been another idea, which has been much dwelt upon in the course of this debate; that is, that we ought not to buy of nations who do not buy of us;

\* Mr. Huskisson, President of the English Board of Trade.

for example, that the Russian trade is a trade disadvantageous to the country, and ought to be discouraged, because, in the ports of Russia, we buy more than we sell. Now allow me to observe, in the first place, sir, that we have no account shewing how much we do sell in the ports of Russia. Our official returns shew us only what is the amount of our direct exports to her ports. But then we all know that the proceeds of other of our exports go to the same market, though indirectly. We send our own products, for example, to Cuba, or to Brazil; we there exchange them for the sugar and the coffee of those countries, and these articles we carry to St. Petersburg, and there sell them. Again; our exports to Holland and Hamburg are connected directly or indirectly with our imports from Russia. What difference does it make, in sense or reason, whether a cargo of iron be bought at St. Petersburg by the exchange of a cargo of tobacco, or whether the tobacco has been sold on the way, in a better market, in a port of Holland, the money remitted to England, and the iron paid for by a bill on London? There might indeed have been an augmented freight, there might have been some saving of commissions, if tobacco had been in brisk demand in the Russian market. But still there is nothing to shew that the whole voyage may not have been highly profitable. That depends upon the original cost of the article here, the amount of freight and insurance to Holland, the price obtained there, the rate of exchange between Holland and England; the expense, then, of proceeding to St. Petersburg, the price of iron there, the rate of exchange between that place and England, the amount of freight and insurance home, and finally, the value of the iron, when brought to our own market. These are the calculations which determine the fortune of the adventure; and nothing can be judged of it, one way or the other, by the relative state of our imports or exports with Holland, England, or Russia.

I would not be understood to deny that it may often be our interest to cultivate a trade with countries that most require such commodities as we can furnish, and which are capable also of directly supplying our own wants. This is the simplest and most original form of all commerce, and is, no doubt, highly beneficial. And some countries are so situated, doubtless, that commerce, in this original form, or something near it, may be all that they can, without considerable inconvenience, carry on. Our trade, for example, with Madeira and the Western Islands, has been useful to the country as furnishing a demand for some portion of our agricultural products, which probably could not have been bought, had we not received their products in return. Countries situated still farther from the great marts and highways of the commercial world, may afford still stronger instances of the necessity and utility of conducting commerce on the original principle of barter, without much assistance from the operations of credit and exchange. All I would be understood to say is, that it by no means follows that that must be a losing trade with any country, from which we receive more of her products than she receives of ours. And since I was supposed the other day, in speaking upon this subject, to have advanced opinions which not only this country ought to reject,

But which also other countries, and those the most distinguished for skill and success in commercial intercourse, do reject, I will ask leave to refer again to the discussion which I first mentioned in the English Parliament, relative to the foreign trade of that country. "With regard," says the mover\* of the proposition, "to the argument employed against renewing our intercourse with the north of Europe, namely, that those who supplied us with timber from that quarter would not receive British manufactures in return, it appeared to him futile and ungrounded. If they did not send direct for our manufactures at home, they would send for them to Leipsic and other fairs of Germany. Were not the Russian and Polish merchants purchasers there to a great amount? But he would never admit the principle, that a trade was not profitable, because we were obliged to carry it on with the precious metals, or that we ought to renounce it, because our manufactures were not received by the foreign nation, in return for its produce. Whatever we received must be paid for in the produce of our land and labor, directly or circuitously, and he was glad to have the noble Earl's† marked concurrence in this principle."

Referring ourselves again, sir, to the analogies of common life, no one would say, that a farmer or a mechanic should buy *only* where he can do so by the exchange of his own produce, or of his own manufacture. Such exchange may be often convenient; and, on the other hand, the cash purchase may be often more convenient. It is the same in the intercourse of nations. Indeed, Mr. Speaker has placed this argument on very clear grounds. It has been said, in the early part of the debate, that if we cease to import English cotton fabrics, England would no longer continue to purchase our cotton. To this, Mr. Speaker has replied, with great force and justice, that, as she must have cotton in large quantities, she will buy the article where she can find it best and cheapest; and that it would be quite ridiculous in her, manufacturing as she still would be, for her own vast consumption, and the consumption of millions in other countries, to reject our uplands, because we had learned to manufacture a part of them for ourselves. And would it not be equally ridiculous in us, if the commodities of Russia were both cheaper, and better suited to our wants, than could be found elsewhere, to abstain from commerce with her, because she will not receive, in return, other commodities which we have to sell, but which she has no occasion to buy?

Intimately connected, sir, with this topic, is another, which has been brought into the debate; I mean, the evil so much complained of—the exportation of specie. We hear gentlemen imputing the loss of market at home to a want of money, and this want of money to the exportation of the precious metals. We hear the India and China trade denounced, as a commerce conducted on our side, in a great measure, with gold and silver. These opinions, sir, are clearly void of all just foundation, and we cannot too soon get rid of them. There

\* Marquis of Lansdowne.

† Lord Liverpool.

are no shallower reasoners, than those political and commercial writers, who would represent it to be the only true and gainful end of commerce, to accumulate the precious metals. These are articles of use, and articles of merchandise, with this additional circumstance belonging to them, that they are made, by the general consent of nations, the standard by which the value of all other merchandise is to be estimated. In regard to weights and measures, something drawn from external nature is made a common standard, for the purposes of general convenience; and this is precisely the office performed by the precious metals, in addition to those uses to which, as metals, they are capable of being applied. There may be of these, too much or too little, in a country, at a particular time, as there may be of any other articles. When the market is overstocked with them, as it often is, their exportation becomes as proper and as useful as that of other commodities, under similar circumstances. We need no more repine, when the dollars, which have been brought here from South America, are despatched to other countries, than when coffee and sugar take the same direction. We often deceive ourselves by attributing to a scarcity of money, that which is the result of other causes. In the course of this debate, the honorable member from Pennsylvania has represented the country as full of every thing but money. But this, I take to be a mistake. The agricultural products, so abundant in Pennsylvania, will not, he says, sell for money; but they will sell for money as quick as for any other article which happens to be in demand. They will sell for money, for example, as easily as for coffee, or for tea, at the prices which properly belong to those articles. The mistake lies in imputing that to want of money, which arises from want of demand. Men do not buy wheat because they have money, but because they want wheat. To decide whether money be plenty or not, that is, whether there be a large portion of capital unemployed or not, when the currency of a country is metallic, we must look, not only to the prices of commodities, but also to the rate of interest. A low rate of interest, a facility of obtaining money on loans, a disposition to invest in permanent stocks, all of which are proofs that money is plenty, may nevertheless often denote a state not of the highest prosperity. They may, and often do, shew a want of employment for capital; and the accumulation of specie shews the same thing. We have no occasion for the precious metals as money, except for the purposes of circulation, or rather of sustaining a safe paper circulation. And whenever there be a prospect of a profitable investment abroad, all the gold and silver, except what these purposes require, will be exported. For the same reason, if a demand exist abroad for sugar and coffee, whatever amount of those articles might exist in the country, beyond the wants of its own consumption, would be sent abroad to meet that demand. Besides, sir, how should it ever occur to any body, that we should continue to export gold and silver, if we did not continue to import them also? If a vessel take our own products to the Havana, or elsewhere, exchange them for dollars, proceed to China, exchange them for silks and teas, bring these last to the ports of the Medi-

terreanean, sell them there for dollars, and return to the United States; this would be a voyage resulting in the importation of the precious metals. But if she had returned from Cuba, and the dollars obtained there had been shipped direct from the United States to China, the China goods sold in Holland, and the proceeds brought home in the hemp and iron of Russia, this would be a voyage in which they were exported. Yet every body sees, that both might be equally beneficial to the individuals and to the public. I believe, sir, that, in point of fact, we have enjoyed great benefit in our trade with India and China, from the liberty of going from place to place all over the world, without being obliged in the mean time, to return home—a liberty not heretofore enjoyed by the private traders of England, in regard to India and China. Suppose the American ship to be at Brazil, for example—she could proceed with her dollars direct to India, and, in return, could distribute her cargo in all the various ports of Europe, or America: while an English ship, if a private trader, being at Brazil, must first return to England, and then could only proceed in the direct line from England to India. This advantage, our countrymen have not been backward to improve; and in the debate to which I have already so often referred, it was stated, not without some complaint of the inconvenience of exclusion, and the natural sluggishness of monopoly, that American ships were at that moment fitting out in the Thames, to supply France, Holland, and other countries on the continent, with tea; while the East India Company would not do this of themselves, nor allow any of their fellow countrymen to do it or them.

There is yet another subject, Mr. Chairman, upon which I would wish to say something, if I might presume upon the continued patience of the Committee. We hear, sometimes, in the House, and continually out of it, of the rate of exchange, as being one proof that we are on the downward road to ruin. Mr. Speaker himself has adverted to that topic, and I am afraid that his authority may give credit to opinions clearly unfounded, and which lead to very false and erroneous conclusions. Sir, let us see what the facts are. Exchange on England has recently risen one or one and a half per cent., partly owing, perhaps, to the introduction of this bill into Congress. Before this recent rise, and for the last six months, I understand its average may have been about seven and a half per cent. advance. Now, supposing this to be the *real*, and not merely, as it is, the nominal par of exchange, between us and England, what would it prove? Nothing, except that funds were wanted, in England, for commercial operations, to be carried on either in England or elsewhere. It would not necessarily shew that we were indebted to England: for, if we had occasion to pay debts in Russia or Holland, funds in England would naturally enough be required for such a purpose. And even if it did prove that a balance was due England, at the moment, it would have no tendency to explain to us whether our commerce with England had been profitable or unprofitable. But it is not true, in point of fact, that the *real* price of exchange is seven and a half per cent. advance, nor, in-

deed, that there is, at the present moment, any advance at all. That is to say, it is not true, that merchants will give such an advance, or any advance, for *money* in England, more than they would give for the same amount, in the same currency, here. It will strike every one, who reflects upon it, that, if there were a real difference of seven and a half per cent. money would be immediately shipped to England; because the expense of transportation would be far less than that difference. Or, commodities of trade would be shipped to Europe, and the proceeds remitted to England. If it could so happen, that American merchants should be willing to pay ten per cent. premium for money in England, or in other words, that a real difference to that amount, in the exchange, should exist, its effects would be immediately seen in new shipments of our own commodities to Europe, because this state of things would create new motives. A cargo of tobacco, for example, might sell at Amsterdam for the same price as before; but if its proceeds, when remitted to London, were advanced, as they would be in such case, ten per cent. by the state of exchange, this would be so much added to the price, and would operate, therefore, as a motive for the exportation; and in this way, national balances are, and always will be, adjusted.

To form any accurate idea of the true state of exchange, between two countries, we must look at their currencies, and compare the quantities of gold and silver which they may respectively represent. This usually explains the state of the exchanges; and this will satisfactorily account for the apparent advance, now existing, on bills drawn on England. The English standard of value is gold: with us, that office is performed by gold, and by silver also, at a fixed relation to each other. But our estimate of silver is rather higher, in proportion to gold, than most nations give it; it is higher, especially, than in England, at the present moment. The consequence is, that silver, which remains a legal currency with us, stays here, while the gold has gone abroad; verifying the universal truth, that, if *two* currencies be allowed to exist, of different values, that which is cheapest will fill up the whole circulation. For as much gold as will suffice to pay here a debt of a given amount, we can buy in England more silver than would be necessary to pay the same debt here; and from this difference in the value of silver arises wholly, or in a great measure, the present apparent difference in exchange. Spanish dollars sell now, in England, for four shillings and nine pence sterling per ounce; equal to one dollar and six cents. By our standard, the same ounce is worth one dollar and sixteen cents; being a difference of about nine per cent. The true par of exchange, therefore, is nine per cent. If a merchant here pay one hundred Spanish dollars for a bill on England, at nominal par, in sterling money, that is, for a bill for £22 10, the proceeds of this bill, when paid in England, in the legal currency, will there purchase, at the present price of silver, one hundred and nine Spanish dollars. Therefore, if the nominal advance on English bills do not exceed nine per cent. the real exchange is not against this country; in other words, it does not shew that there is any pressing or particular occasion for the remittance of funds to England.

As little can be inferred from the occasional transfer of United States' stock to England. Considering the interest paid on our stocks, the entire stability of our credit, and the accumulation of capital in England, it is not at all wonderful that investments should occasionally be made in our funds. As a sort of countervailing fact, it may be stated that English stocks are now actually holden in this country, though probably not to any considerable amount.

I will now proceed, sir, to state some objections which I feel, of a more general nature, to the course of Mr. Speaker's observations.

He seems to me to argue the question as if all domestic industry were confined to the production of manufactured articles; as if the employment of our own capital, and our own labor, in the occupations of commerce and navigation, were not as emphatically domestic industry as any other occupation. Some other gentlemen, in the course of the debate, have spoken of the price paid for every foreign manufactured article, as so much given for the encouragement of foreign labor, to the prejudice of our own. But is not every such article the product of our own labor as truly as if we had manufactured it ourselves? Our labor has earned it, and paid the price for it. It is so much added to the stock of national wealth. If the commodity were dollars, nobody would doubt the truth of this remark; and it is precisely as correct in its application to any other commodity as to silver. One man makes a yard of cloth at home; another raises agricultural products, and buys a yard of imported cloth. Both these are equally the earnings of domestic industry, and the only questions that arise in the case are two: the first is, which is the best mode, under all the circumstances, of obtaining the article; the second is, *how far this first question is proper to be decided by government, and how far it is proper to be left to individual discretion.* There is no foundation for the distinction which attributes to certain employments the peculiar appellation of American industry; and it is, in my judgment, extremely unwise, to attempt such discriminations. We are asked what nations have ever attained eminent prosperity without encouraging manufactures? I may ask, what nation ever reached the like prosperity without promoting foreign trade? I regard these interests as closely connected, and am of opinion that it should be our aim to cause them to flourish together. I know it would be very easy to promote manufactures, at least for a time, but probably only for a short time, if we might act in disregard of other interests. We could cause a sudden transfer of capital, and a violent change in the pursuits of men. We could exceedingly benefit some classes by these means. But what, then, becomes of the interests of others? The power of collecting revenue by duties on imports, and the habit of the government of collecting almost its whole revenue in that mode, will enable us, without exceeding the bounds of moderation, to give great advantages to those classes of manufactures which we may think, most useful to promote at home. What I object to is the immoderate use of the power—exclusions and prohibitions; all of which, as I think, not only interrupt the pursuits of individuals, with great injury to themselves, and little or

no benefit to the country, but also often divert our own labor, or, as it may very properly be called, our own domestic industry, from those occupations in which it is well employed and well paid, to others, in which it will be worse employed, and worse paid. For my part, I see very little relief to those who are likely to be deprived of their employments, or who find the prices of the commodities which they need, raised, in any of the alternatives which Mr. Speaker has presented. It is nothing to say that they may, if they choose, continue to buy the foreign article; the answer is, the price is augmented: nor that they may use the domestic article; the price of that also is increased. Nor can they supply themselves by the substitution of their own fabric. How can the agriculturist make his own iron? How can the ship owner grow his own hemp?

But I have a yet stronger objection to the course of Mr. Speaker's reasoning; which is, that he leaves out of the case all that has been already done for the protection of manufactures, and argues the question as if those interests were now, for the first time, to receive aid from duties on imports. I can hardly express the surprise I feel that Mr. Speaker should fall into the common modes of expression used elsewhere, and ask if we will give our manufacturers no protection. Sir, look to the history of our laws; look to the present state of our laws. Consider that our whole revenue, with a trifling exception, is collected at the custom house, and always has been; and then say what propriety there is in calling on the government for protection, as if no protection had heretofore been afforded. The real question before us, in regard to all the important clauses of the bill, is not whether we will *lay* duties, but whether we will *augment* duties. The demand is for something more than exists, and yet it is pressed as if nothing existed. It is wholly forgotten that iron and hemp, for example, already pay a very heavy and burthensom duty; and, in short, from the general tenor of Mr. Speaker's observations, one would infer that, hitherto, we had rather taxed our own manufactures than fostered them by taxes on those of other countries. We hear of the fatal policy of the tariff of 1816; and yet the law of 1816 was passed avowedly for the benefit of manufacturers, and, with very few exceptions, imposed on imported articles very great additions of tax; in some important instances, indeed, amounting to a prohibition.

Sir, on this subject it becomes us at least to understand the real posture of the question. Let us not suppose that we are *beginning* the protection of manufactures, by duties on imports. What we are asked to do is, to render those duties much higher, and therefore, instead of dealing in general commendations of the benefits of protection, the friends of the bill, I think, are bound to make out a fair case for each of the manufactures which they propose to benefit. The government has already done much for their protection, and it ought to be presumed to have done enough, unless it be shewn, by the facts and considerations applicable to each, that there is a necessity for doing more.

On the general question, sir, allow me to ask if the doctrine of prohibition, as a general doctrine, be not *proposterous*? Suppose all na-



tions to act upon it; they would be prosperous, then, according to the argument, precisely in the proportion in which they abolished intercourse with one another. The less of mutual commerce the better, upon this hypothesis. Protection and encouragement may be, and are, doubtless, sometimes, wise and beneficial, if kept within proper limits; but, when carried to an extravagant height, or the point of prohibition, the absurd character of the system manifests itself. Mr. Speaker has referred to the late Emperor Napoleon, as having attempted to naturalize the manufacture of cotton in France. He did not cite a more extravagant part of the projects of that ruler, that is, his attempt to naturalize the growth of that plant itself in France; whereas, we have understood that considerable districts in the south of France, and in Italy, of rich and productive lands, were at one time withdrawn from profitable uses, and devoted to raising, at great expense, a little bad cotton. Nor have we been referred to the attempts, under the same system, to make sugar and coffee from common culinary vegetables; attempts which served to fill the print shops of Europe, and to shew us how easy is the transition from what some think sublime, to that which all admit to be ridiculous. The folly of some of these projects has not been surpassed, nor hardly equalled, unless it be by the philosopher in one of the satires of Swift, who so long labored to extract sunbeams from cucumbers.\*

The poverty and unhappiness of Spain have been attributed to the want of protection to her own industry. If by this it be meant that the poverty of Spain is owing to bad government and bad laws, the remark is, in a great measure, just. But these very laws are bad because they are restrictive, partial, and prohibitory. If prohibition were protection, Spain would seem to have had enough of it. Nothing can exceed the barbarous rigidity of her colonial system, or the folly of her early commercial regulations. Unenlightened and bigoted legislation, the multitude of holidays, miserable roads, monopolies on the part of government, restrictive laws, that ought long since to have been abrogated, are generally, and I believe truly, reckoned the principal causes of the bad state of the productive industry of Spain. Any partial improvement in her condition, or increase of her prosperity, has been, in all cases, the result of relaxation, and the abolition of what was intended for favor and protection.

In short, sir, the general sense of this age sets, with a strong current, in favor of freedom of commercial intercourse, and unrestrained individual action. Men yield up their notions of monopoly and restriction, as they yield up other prejudices, slowly and reluctantly; but they cannot withstand the general tide of opinion.

\* "The first man I saw was of a meagre aspect, with sooty hands and face. His hair and beard long, ragged, and singed in several places. His clothes, shirt, and skin, were all of the same color. He had been eight years upon a project for extracting sun-beams out of cucumbers, which were to be put into phials hermetically sealed, and let out to warm the air, in raw and inclement summers. He told me, he did not doubt, in eight years more, he should be able to supply the Governor's gardens with sunshine, at a reasonable rate; but he complained that his stock was low, and intreated me to give him something as an *encouragement to ingenuity*, especially as this had been a dear season for cucumbers."

Let me now ask, sir, what relief this bill proposes to some of those great and essential interests of the country, the condition of which has been referred to as proof of national distress; and which condition, although I do not think it makes out a case of *distress*, yet does indicate depression.

And first, sir, as to our Foreign Trade. Mr. Speaker has stated that there has been a considerable falling off in the tonnage employed in that trade. This is true, lamentably true. In my opinion, it is one of those occurrences which ought to arrest our immediate, our deep, our most earnest attention. What does this bill propose for its relief? Sir, it proposes nothing but new burdens. It proposes to diminish its employment, and it proposes, at the same time, to augment its expense, by subjecting it to heavier taxation. Sir, there is no interest, in regard to which a stronger case for protection can be made out, than the navigating interest. Whether we look at its present condition, which is admitted to be depressed; the number of persons connected with it, and dependent upon it for their daily bread; or its importance to the country in a political point of view, it has claims upon our attention which cannot be exceeded. But what do we propose to do for it? I repeat, sir, simply to burden and to tax it. By a statement which I have already submitted to the Committee, it appears that the shipping interest pays, annually, more than half a million of dollars in duties on articles used in the construction of ships. We propose to add nearly, or quite, fifty per cent. to this amount, at the very moment that we bring forth the languishing state of this interest, as a proof of national distress. Let it be remembered that our shipping employed in foreign commerce, has, at this moment, not the shadow of government protection. It goes abroad upon the wide sea to make its own way, and earn its own bread, in a professed competition with the whole world. Its resources are its own frugality, its own skill, its own enterprize. It hopes to succeed, if it shall succeed at all, not by extraordinary aid of government, but by patience, vigilance, and toil. This right arm of the nation's safety strengthens its own muscle by its own efforts, and by unwearied exertion in its own defence becomes strong for the defence of the country.

No one acquainted with this interest, can deny that its situation, at this moment, is extremely critical. We have left it hitherto to maintain itself or perish; to swim if it can, and to sink if it cannot. But at this moment of its apparent struggle, can we, as men, can we, as patriots, add another stone to the weight that threatens to carry it down? Sir, there is a limit to human power, and to human effort. I know the commercial marine of this country can do almost every thing, and bear almost every thing. Yet some things are impossible to be done; and some burthens may be impossible to be borne; and as it was the last ounce that broke the back of the camel, so the last tax, although it were even a small one, may be decisive as to the power of our marine, to sustain the conflict in which it is now engaged, with all the commercial nations on the globe.

Again, Mr. Chairman, the failures and the bankruptcies which have taken place in our large cities, have been mentioned as proving the

little success attending *commerce*, and its general decline. But this bill has no balm for those wounds. It is very remarkable, that, when losses and disasters of certain manufacturers, those of iron, for instance, are mentioned, it is done for the purpose of invoking aid for the distressed. Not so with the losses and disasters of *commerce*; these last are narrated, and not unfrequently much exaggerated, to prove the ruinous nature of the employment, and to show that it ought to be abandoned, and the capital engaged in it turned to other objects.

It has been often said, sir, that our manufactures have to contend, not only against the natural advantages of those who produce similar articles in foreign countries, but also against the action of foreign governments, who have great political interest in aiding their own manufactures to suppress ours. But have not these governments as great an interest to cripple our marine, by preventing the growth of our commerce and navigation? What is it that makes us the object of the highest respect, or the most suspicious jealousy, to foreign states? What is it that most enables us to take high relative rank among the nations? I need not say that this results, more than from any thing else, from that quantity of military power which we can cause to be water borne, and of that extent of commerce, which we are able to maintain throughout the world.

Mr. Chairman, I am conscious of having detained the committee much too long with these observations. My apology for now proceeding to some remarks upon the particular clauses of the Bill, is, that, representing a district, at once commercial and highly manufacturing, and being called upon to vote upon a Bill, containing provisions so numerous, and so various, I am naturally desirous to state as well what I approve, as what I would reject.

The first section proposes an augmented duty upon woollen manufactures. This, if it were unqualified, would no doubt be desirable to those who are engaged in that business. I have myself presented a petition from the woollen manufacturers of Massachusetts, praying an augmented *ad valorem* duty upon imported woollen cloths; and I am prepared to accede to that proposition, to a reasonable extent. But then this Bill proposes, also, a very high duty upon imported wool; and, as far as I can learn, a majority of the manufacturers are at least extremely doubtful whether, taking these two provisions together, the state of the law is not better for them now, than it would be if this Bill should pass. It is said, this tax on raw wool will benefit the agriculturist; but I know it to be the opinion of some of the best informed of that class, that it will do them more hurt than good. They fear it will check the manufacturer, and consequently check his demand for their article. The argument is, that a certain quantity of coarse wool, cheaper than we can possibly furnish, is necessary to enable the manufacturer to carry on the general business, and that if this cannot be had, the consequence will be, not a greater, but a less, manufacture of our own wool. I am aware that very intelligent persons differ upon this point; but, if we may safely infer from that difference of opinion, that the proposed benefit is at

least doubtful, it would be prudent perhaps to abstain from the experiment. Certain it is, that the same course of reasoning has occurred, as I have before stated, on the same subject, when a renewed application was made to the English Parliament to repeal the duty on imported wool, I believe scarcely two months ago; those who support the application, pressing urgently the necessity of an unrestricted use of the cheap, imported raw material, with a view to supply, with coarse cloths, the markets of warm climates, such as those of Egypt and Turkey, and especially a vast new created demand in the South American states.

As to the manufactures of cotton, it is agreed, I believe, that they are generally successful. It is understood that the present existing duty operates pretty much as a prohibition over those descriptions of fabrics to which it applies. The proposed alteration would probably enable the American manufacturer to commence competition with higher priced fabrics; and so would, perhaps, an augmentation less than is here proposed. I consider the cotton manufactures not only to have reached, but to have passed, the point of competition. I regard their success as certain, and their growth as rapid as the most impatient could well expect. If, however, a provision of the nature of that recommended here, were thought necessary to commence new operations in the same line of manufacture, I should cheerfully agree to it, if it were not at the cost of sacrificing other great interests of the country. I need hardly say, that whatever promotes the cotton and woollen manufactures, promotes most important interests of my constituents. They have a great stake in the success of those establishments, and as far as those manufactures are concerned, would be as much benefitted by the provisions of this bill, as any part of the community. It is obvious too, I should think, that, for some considerable time, manufactures of this sort, to whatever magnitude they may rise, will be principally established in those parts of the country where population is most dense, capital most abundant, and where the most successful beginnings have been already made.

But if these be thought to be advantages, they are greatly counterbalanced by other advantages enjoyed by other portions of the country. I cannot but regard the situation of the West, as highly favorable to human happiness. It offers, in the abundance of its new and fertile lands, such assurances of permanent property and respectability to the industrious, it enables them to lay such sure foundations for a competent provision for their families, it makes such a nation of freeholders, that it need not envy the happiest and most prosperous of the manufacturing communities. We may talk as we will of well fed and well clothed day laborers or journeymen; they are not, after all, to be compared, either for happiness, or respectability, with him who sleeps under his own roof, and cultivates his own fee simple inheritance.

With respect to the proposed duty on *Glass*, I would observe, that, upon the best means of judging which I possess, I am of opinion, that the Chairman of the Committee is right, in stating, that there is, in effect, a bounty upon the exportation of the British article. I think it entirely proper, therefore, to raise our own duty by such an amount as shall be equivalent to that bounty.

And, here Mr. Chairman, before proceeding to those parts of the Bill to which I most strenuously object, I will be so presumptuous, as to take up a challenge which Mr. Speaker has thrown down. He has asked us, in a tone of interrogatory indicative of the feeling of anticipated triumph, to mention any country in which manufactures have flourished, without the aid of prohibitory laws. He has demanded, if it be not policy, protection, aye, and prohibition, that have carried other states to the height of their prosperity, and whether any one has succeeded with such tame and inert legislation as ours. Sir, I am ready to answer this inquiry.

There is a country, not undistinguished among the nations, in which the progress of manufactures has been far more rapid than in any other, and yet unaided by prohibitions or unnatural restrictions. That country, the happiest which the sun shines on, is our own.

The woollen manufactures of England have existed from the early ages of the monarchy. Provisions, designed to aid and foster them, are in the blacklettered statutes of the Edwards and the Henrys. Ours, on the contrary, are but of yesterday; and yet, with no more than the protection of existing laws, they are already at the point of close and promising competition. Sir, nothing is more unphilosophical than to refer us, on these subjects, to the policy adopted by other nations in a very different state of society, or to infer that what was judged expedient by them, in their early history, must also be expedient for us, in this early part of our own. This would be reckoning our age chronologically, and estimating our advance by our number of years; when, in truth, we should regard only the state of society, the knowledge, the skill, the capital, the enterprise, which belong to our times. We have been transferred from the stock of Europe, in a comparatively enlightened age, and our civilization and improvement date back as early as her own. Her original history is, also, our original history; and if, since the moment of separation, she has gone ahead of us, in some respects, it may be said, without violating truth, that we have kept up in others, and, in others again, are ahead ourselves. We are to legislate, then, with regard to the present actual state of society; and our own experience shews us that, commencing manufactures at the present highly enlightened and emulous moment, we need not imitate the clumsy helps, with which, in less auspicious times, governments have sought to enable the ingenuity and industry of their people to hobble along.

The English cotton manufactures began about the commencement of the last reign. Ours can hardly be said to have commenced, with any earnestness, until the application of the power-loom, in 1816, not more than eight years ago. Now, sir, I hardly need again speak of its progress, its present extent, or its assurance of future enlargement. In some sorts of fabricks we are already exporters, and the products of our manufactories are, at this moment, in the South American markets. We see, then, what *can* be done without prohibition or extraordinary protection, because we see what *has* been done; and I venture to predict that, in a few years, it will be thought wonderfu

that these branches of manufactures, at least, should have been thought to require additional aid from government.

Mr. Chairman : The best apology for laws of prohibition and laws of monopoly, will be found in that state of society, not only unenlightened, but sluggish, in which they are most generally established. Private industry, in those days, required strong provocatives, which governments were seeking to administer by these means. Something was wanted to actuate and stimulate men, and the prospects of such profits as would, in our times, excite unbounded competition, would hardly move the sloth of former ages. In some instances, no doubt, these laws produced an effect, which, in that period, would not have taken place without them. But our age is wholly of a different character, and its legislation takes another turn. Society is full of excitement; competition comes in place of monopoly; and intelligence and industry ask only for fair play and an open field. Profits, indeed, in such a state of things, will be small, but they will be extensively diffused; prices will be low, and the great body of the people prosperous and happy. It is worthy of remark, that, from the operation of these causes, commercial wealth, while it is increased beyond calculation in its general aggregate, is, at the same time, broken and diminished in its subdivisions. Commercial prosperity should be judged of therefore rather from the extent of trade, than from the magnitude of its apparent profits. It has been remarked, that Spain, certainly one of the poorest nations, made very great profits on the amount of her trade; but with little other benefit than the enriching of a few individuals and companies. Profits to the English merchants engaged in the Levant and Turkey trade, were formerly very great, and there were richer merchants in England some centuries ago, considering the comparative value of money, than at the present highly commercial period. When the diminution of profits arises from the extent of competition, it indicates rather a salutary than an injurious change.\*

The true course then, Sir, for us to pursue, is, in my opinion, to consider what our situation is; what our means are; and how they can be best applied. What amount of population have we, in comparison with our extent of soil, what amount of capital, and labor at what price? As to skill, knowledge, and enterprise, we may safely take it for granted, that, in these particulars, we are on an equality with others. Keeping these considerations in view, allow me to examine two or three of those provisions of the bill to which I feel the strongest objections.

\* "The present equable diffusion of moderate wealth cannot be better illustrated, than by remarking that in this age many palaces and superb mansions have been pulled down, or converted to other purposes, while none have been erected on a like scale. The numberless baronial castles and mansions, in all parts of England, now in ruins, may all be adduced as examples of the decrease of inordinate wealth. On the other hand, the multiplication of commodious dwellings, for the upper and middle classes of society, and the increased comforts of all ranks, exhibit a picture of individual happiness, unknown in any other age."—*Sir G. Blane's Letter to Lord Spencer, in 1800.*

To begin with the article of iron. Our whole annual consumption of this article is supposed by the Chairman of the Committee, to be 48,000 or 50,000 tons. Let us suppose the latter. The amount of our own manufacture he estimates, I think, at 17,000 tons. The present duty on the imported article, is \$15 per ton, and as this duty causes of course an equivalent augmentation of the price of the home manufacture, the whole increase of price is equal to \$750,000 annually. This sum we pay on a raw material, and on an absolute necessary of life. The Bill proposes to raise the duty from \$15 to \$22 50 per ton, which would be equal to \$1,125,000 on the whole annual consumption. So that, suppose the point of prohibition which is aimed at by some gentlemen to be attained, the consumers of the article would pay this last mentioned sum every year to the producers of it, over and above the price at which they could supply themselves with the same article from other sources. There would be no mitigation of this burthen, except from the prospect, whatever that might be, that iron would fall in value, by domestic competition, after the importation should be prohibited. It will be easy, I think, to shew, that it cannot fall; and supposing for the present that it shall not, the result will be, that we shall pay annually a sum of \$1,125,000, constantly augmented, too, by increased consumption of the article, *to support a business that cannot support itself*. It is of no consequence to the argument, that this sum is expended at home; so it would be, if we taxed the people to support any other useless and expensive establishment, to build another Capitol for example, or incur an unnecessary expense of any sort. The question still is, are the money, time, and labor, well laid out in these cases? The present price of iron at Stockholm, I am assured by importers, is \$53 per ton on board, \$48 in the yard before loading, and probably not far from \$40 at the mines. Freight, insurance, &c. may be fairly estimated at \$15, to which add our present duty of \$15 more, and these two last sums, together with the cost on board at Stockholm, give \$83 as the cost of Swedes iron in our market. In fact it is said to have been sold last year at \$81 50 to \$82 per ton. We perceive, by this statement, that the cost of the iron is doubled in reaching us from the mine in which it is produced. In other words, our present duty with the expense of transportation, gives an advantage to the American, over the foreign manufacturer, of one hundred per cent. Why then cannot the iron be manufactured at home? Our ore is said to be as good, and some of it better. It is under our feet, and the chairman of the committee tells us, that it might be wrought by persons who otherwise will not be employed. *Why then is it not wrought?* Nothing could be more sure of constant sale. It is not an article of changeable fashion, but of absolute, permanent necessity, and such, therefore, as would always meet a steady demand. Sir, I think it would be well for the chairman of the committee to revise his premises, for I am persuaded that there is an ingredient properly belonging to the calculation which he has misstated or omitted. Swedes iron in England pays a duty, I think, of about \$27 per ton; yet it is imported in considerable

quantities, notwithstanding the vast capital, the excellent coal, and, more important than all perhaps, the highly improved state of inland navigation in England; although I am aware that the English use of Swedes iron may be thought to be owing in some degree to its superior quality.

Sir, the true explanation of this, appears to me to lie in the different prices of labor; and here I apprehend is the grand mistake in the argument of the chairman of the committee. He says it would cost the nation, as a nation, nothing, to make our ore into iron. Now, I think it would cost us precisely that which we can worst afford; that is, great labor. Although bar iron is very properly considered a raw material in respect to its various future uses; yet, as bar iron, the principal ingredient in its cost is labor. Of manual labor, no nation has more than a certain quantity, nor can it be increased at will. As to some operations, indeed, its place may be supplied by machinery; but there are other services which machinery cannot perform for it, and which it must perform for itself. A most important question for every nation, as well as for every individual to propose to itself, is, how it can best apply that quantity of labor which it is able to perform? Labor is the great producer of wealth; it moves all other causes. If it call machinery to its aid, it is still employed not only in using the machinery, but in making it. Now, with respect to the quantity of labor, as we all know, different nations are differently circumstanced. Some need, more than any thing, work for hands, others require hands for work; and if we ourselves are not absolutely in the latter class, we are still, most fortunately, very near it. I cannot find that we have those idle hands, of which the chairman of the committee speaks. The price of labor is a conclusive and unanswerable refutation of that idea; it is known to be higher with us than in any other civilized state, and this is the greatest of all proofs of general happiness. Labor in this country is independent and proud. It has not to ask the patronage of capital, but capital solicits the aid of labor. This is the general truth, in regard to the condition of our whole population, although in the large cities there are, doubtless, many exceptions. The mere capacity to labor in common agricultural employments, gives to our young men the assurance of independence. We have been asked, Sir, by the chairman of the committee, in a tone of some pathos, whether we will allow to the serfs of Russia and Sweden the benefit of making iron for us? Let me inform the gentleman, Sir, that those same serfs do not earn more than seven cents a day, and that they work in these mines, for that compensation, because they are serfs. And let me ask the gentleman further, *whether we have any labor in this country that cannot be better employed than in a business which does not yield the laborer more than seven cents a day?* This, it appears to me, is the true question for our consideration. There is no reason for saying that we will work iron because we have mountains that contain the ore. We might for the same reason dig among our rocks for the scattered grains of gold and silver which might be found there. *The true inquiry is, can we pro-*



*duce the article in a useful state at the same cost, or nearly at the same cost, or at any reasonable approximation towards the same cost, at which we can import it.*

Some general estimates of the price and profits of labor, in those countries from which we import our iron, might be formed by comparing the reputed products of different mines, and their prices, with the number of hands employed. The mines of Danemora are said to yield about 4000 tons, and to employ in the mines twelve hundred workmen. Suppose this to be worth 50 dollars per ton; any one will find by computation that the whole product would not pay in this country, for one quarter part of the necessary labor. The whole export of Sweden was estimated, a few years ago, at 400,000 ship-pounds, or about 54,000 tons. Comparing this product with the number of workmen usually supposed to be employed in the mines which produce iron for exportation, the result will not greatly differ from the foregoing. These estimates are general, and might not conduct us to a precise result; but we know, from intelligent travellers, and eye-witnesses, that the price of labor in the Swedish mines, does not exceed seven cents a day.\*

The true reason, Sir, why it is not our policy to compel our citizens to manufacture our own iron, is, that they are far better employed. It is an unproductive business, and they are not poor enough to be obliged to follow it. If we had more of poverty, more of misery, and something of servitude, if we had an ignorant, idle starving population, we might set up for iron makers against the world.

The committee will take notice, Mr. Chairman, that, under our present duty, together with the expense of transportation, our manufacturers are able to supply their own immediate neighborhood; and this proves the magnitude of that substantial encouragement which these two causes concur to give. There is little or no foreign iron, I presume, used in the county of Lancaster. This is owing to the heavy expense of land carriage; and, as we recede farther from the coast, the manufacturers are still more completely secured, as to their own immediate market, against the competition of the imported article. But what they ask is to be allowed to supply the seacoast, at such a price as shall be formed by adding to the cost at the mines the expense of land carriage to the sea; and this appears to me most unreasonable. The

\* The price of labor in Russia may be pretty well collected from Tooke's "View of the Russian Empire." "The workmen in the mines and the founderies are, indeed, all called master-people; but they distinguish themselves into masters, undermasters, apprentices, delvers, servants, carriers, washers, and separators. In proportion to their ability their wages are regulated, which proceed from 15 to upwards of 30 roubles per annum. The provisions which they receive from the magazines are deducted from this pay." The value of the rouble at that time (1799) was about 24 pence sterling, or 45 cents of our money.

"By the edict of 1799," it is added, "a laborer with a horse shall receive, daily, in summer, 20, and in winter 12 copecks; a laborer, without a horse, in summer, 10, in winter, 8, copecks."

A copeck is the hundredth part of a rouble, or about half a cent of our money. The price of labour may have risen, in some degree, since that period, but probably not much.

effect of it would be to compel the consumer to pay the cost of two land transportations; for, in the first place, the price of iron, at the inland furnaces, will always be found to be at, or not much below, the price of the imported article in the seaport, and the cost of transportation to the neighborhood of the furnace; and to enable the home product to hold a competition with the imported in the seaport, the cost of another transportation downward, from the furnace to the coast, must be added. Until our means of inland commerce be improved, and the charges of transportation by that means lessened, it appears to me wholly impracticable, with such duties as any one would think of proposing, to meet the wishes of the manufacturers of this article. Suppose we were to add the duty proposed by this bill, although it would benefit the capital invested in works near the sea, and the navigable rivers, yet the benefit would not extend far in the interior. Where, then, are we to stop, or what limit is proposed to us?

The freight of iron has been afforded from Sweden to the United States as low as eight dollars per ton. This is not more than the price of fifty miles land carriage. Stockholm, therefore, for the purpose of this argument, may be considered as within fifty miles of Philadelphia. Now, it is at once a just and a strong view of this case, to consider, that there are, within fifty miles of our market, vast multitudes of persons who are willing to labor in the production of this article for us, at the rate of seven cents per day, while we have no labor which will not command, upon the average, at least five or six times that amount. The question is, then, shall we buy this article of these manufacturers, and suffer our own labor to earn its greater reward, or shall we employ our own labor in a similar manufacture, and make up to it, by a tax on consumers, the loss which it must necessarily sustain.

I proceed, sir, to the article of hemp. Of this we imported last year, in round numbers, 6,000 tons, paying a duty of \$30 a ton, or \$180,000 on the whole amount; and this article, it is to be remembered, is consumed almost entirely in the uses of navigation. The whole burthen may be said to fall on one interest. It is said we can produce this article if we will raise the duties. But why is it not produced now; or why, at least, have we not seen some specimens? for the present is a very high duty, when expenses of importation are added. Hemp was purchased at St. Petersburg, last year, at \$101 67 per ton. Charges attending shipment, &c. \$14 25. Freight may be stated at \$30 per ton, and our existing duty is \$30 more. These three last sums, being the charges of transportation, amount to a protection of near 75 per cent. in favor of the home manufacturer, if there were any such. And we ought to consider, also, that the price of hemp at St. Petersburg is increased by all the expense of transportation from the place of growth to that port; so that probably the whole cost of transportation, from the place of growth to our market, including our duty, is equal to the first cost of the article; or, in other words, is a protection in favor of our own product of 100 per cent.

And since it is stated that we have great quantities of fine land for the production of hemp, of which I have no doubt, the question recurs, *why is it not produced?* I speak of the *water rotted hemp*, for it is admitted that that which is dew rotted is not sufficiently good for the requisite purposes. I cannot say whether the cause be in climate, in the process of rotting, or what else, but the fact is certain, that there is no American water rotted hemp in the market. We are acting, therefore, upon a hypothesis. Is it not reasonable that those who say that they *can* produce the article, shall at least prove the truth of that allegation before new taxes are laid on those who use the foreign commodity? Suppose this bill passes: the price of hemp is immediately raised \$14 80 per ton, and this burden falls immediately on the ship builder; and no part of it, for the present, will go for the benefit of the American grower, because he has none of the article that can be used, nor is it expected that much of it will be produced for a considerable time. Still the tax takes effect upon the imported article; and the ship owners, to enable the Kentucky farmer to receive an additional \$14 on his ton of hemp, *whenever he may be able to raise and manufacture it*, pay, in the mean time, an equal sum per ton into the Treasury on all the *imported* hemp which they are still obliged to use; and this is called "protection!" Is this just or fair? A particular interest is here burdened, not only for the benefit of another particular interest, but burdened also beyond that, for the benefit of the Treasury. It is said to be important for the country that this article should be raised in it; then, let the country bear the expense, and pay the bounty. If it be for the good of the whole, let the sacrifice be made by the whole, and not by a part. If it be thought useful and necessary, from political considerations, to encourage the growth and manufacture of hemp, government has abundant means of doing it. It might give a direct bounty, and such a measure would, at least, distribute the burden equally; or, as government itself is a great consumer of this article, it might stipulate to confine its own purchases to the home product, so soon as it should be shewn to be of the proper quality. I see no objection to this proceeding, if it be thought to be an object to encourage the production. It might easily, and perhaps properly, be provided, by law, that the Navy should be supplied with American hemp, the quality being good, at any price not exceeding, by more than a given amount, the current price of foreign hemp in our market. Every thing conspires to render some such course preferable to the one now proposed. The encouragement in that way would be ample, and, if the experiment should succeed, the whole object would be gained; and if it should fail, no considerable loss or evil would be felt by any one.

I stated, some days ago, and I wish to renew the statement, what was the amount of the proposed augmentation of the duties on iron and hemp, in the cost of a vessel. Take the case of a common ship, of 300 tons, not coppered, nor copper fastened. It would stand thus, by the present duties:

14 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tons of iron, for hull, rigging, and anchors, at \$15 per ton	\$ 217 50
10 Tons of hemp, at \$30	300 00
40 Bolts Russia duck, at \$2	80 00
20 Bolts Ravens duck, at \$1 25	25 00
On articles of ship chandlery, cabin furniture, hardware, &c.	40 00
	<hr/>
	\$ 662 50

The bill proposes to add:

\$7 40 per ton on iron, which will be	\$107 30
\$14 80 per ton on hemp, equal to	148 00
And on duck, by the late amendment of the bill, say 25 per cent	25 00
	<hr/>
	\$ 280 30

But, to the duties on iron and hemp, should be added those paid on copper, whenever that article is used. By the statement which I furnished the other day, it appeared that the duties received by government, on articles used in the construction of a vessel of 359 tons, with copper *fastenings*, amounted to \$1056. With the augmentations of this Bill, they would be equal to \$1400. Now, I cannot but flatter myself, Mr. Chairman, that, before the committee will consent to this new burthen upon the shipping interest, it will very deliberately weigh the probable consequences. I would again urgently solicit its attention to the condition of that interest. We are told that Government has protected it, by discriminating duties, and by an exclusive right to the coasting trade. But it would retain the coasting trade, by its own natural efforts, in like manner, and with more certainty, than it now retains any portion of foreign trade. The discriminating duties are now abolished, and while they existed, they were nothing more than countervailing measures; not so much designed to give our navigation an advantage over that of other nations, as to put it upon an equality; and we have, accordingly, abolished ours, when they have been willing to abolish theirs. Look to the rate of freights. Were they ever lower, or even so low? I ask gentlemen who know, whether the harbor of Charleston, and the river of Savannah, be not crowded with ships seeking employment, and finding none? I would ask the gentlemen from New Orleans, if their magnificent Mississippi do not exhibit, for furlongs, a forest of masts? The condition, Sir, of the shipping interest is not that of those who are insisting on high profits, or struggling for monopoly; but it is the condition of men content with the smallest earnings, and anxious for their bread. The freight of cotton has formerly been three pence sterling, from Charleston to Liverpool, in time of peace. It is now I know not what, or how many, fractions of a penny; I think, however, it is stated at five-eighths. The producers, then, of this great staple, are able, by means

of this navigation, to send it, for a cent a pound, from their own doors to the best market in the world.

Mr. Chairman, I will now only remind the committee that, while we are proposing to add new burthens to the shipping interest, a very different line of policy is followed by our great commercial and maritime rival. It seems to be announced as the sentiment of the Government of England, and undoubtedly it is its real sentiment, that the first of all manufactures is the manufacture of ships. A constant and wakeful attention is paid to this interest, and very important regulations, favorable to it, have been adopted within the last year, some of which I will beg leave to refer to, with the hope of exciting the notice, not only of the committee, but of all others who may feel, as I do, a deep interest in this subject. In the first place, a general amendment has taken place in the register acts, introducing many new provisions, and, among others, the following:

A direct mortgage of the interest of a ship is allowed, without subjecting the mortgagee to the responsibility of an owner.

The proportion of interest held by each owner is exhibited in the register, thereby facilitating both sales and mortgages, and giving a new value to shipping among the monied classes.

Shares, in the ships of copartnerships, may be registered as joint property, and subject to the same rules as other partnership effects.

Ships may be registered in the name of trustees, for the benefit of joint stock companies; and many other regulations are adopted with the same general view of rendering the mode of holding the property as convenient and as favourable as possible.

By another act, British registered vessels, of every description, are allowed to enter into the general and the coasting trade in the India seas, and may now trade to and from India, with any part of the world, except China.

By a third, all limitations and restrictions, as to latitude and longitude, are removed from ships engaged in the Southern whale fishery. These regulations, I presume, have not been made without first obtaining the consent of the East India Company; so true is it found, that real encouragement of enterprize oftener consists, in our days, in restraining or buying off monopolies and prohibitions, than in imposing or extending them.

The trade with Ireland is turned into a free coasting trade; light-duties have been reduced, and various other beneficial arrangements made, and still others proposed. I might add, that, in favor of general commerce, and as shewing their confidence in the principles of liberal intercourse, the British government has perfected the warehouse system, and authorized a reciprocity of duties with foreign states, at the discretion of the Privy Council.

This, sir, is the attention which our great rival is paying to these important subjects, and we may assure ourselves that, if we do not keep alive a proper sense of our own interests, she will not only beat us, but will deserve to beat us.

Sir, I will detain you no longer. There are some parts of this Bill which I highly approve; there are others in which I should acquiesce;

but those to which I have now stated my objections appear to me so destitute of all justice, so burthensome and so dangerous to that interest which has steadily enriched, gallantly defended, and proudly distinguished us, that nothing can prevail upon me to give it my support.

## NOTE.

Since the delivery of this Speech, an arrival has brought London papers containing the Speech of the English Chancellor of the Exchequer, (Mr. Robinson,) on the 23d February last, in submitting to Parliament the Annual Financial Statement. The author hopes he may be pardoned for adding the following extract from that Speech, as showing, pretty clearly, whether he was right, in his representation of the prevailing sentiment, in the English Government, on the general subject of prohibitory laws, and on the silk manufacture, and the wool tax, particularly.

“In the earlier part of what I have taken the liberty of addressing to the Committee, I alluded to that portion of this question which refers to a more free and liberal system of policy in matters of trade. To this division of the subject, I will now particularly invite attention. There are, as of course Honorable Gentlemen are aware, various branches of our commerce, loaded on the one hand with high duties upon the importation, and which, in an opposite direction, are encumbered with restrictions and prohibitions of different kinds. Amongst these is the article of wool (Hear.) As the law now stands, (which, by the way, as far as duty is concerned, is of very recent establishment,) the duty is 6d per lb.; it was originally one penny. This duty was imposed in the year 1819, not at all, as has been often in my opinion, and indeed in the opinion also of my noble friend at the head of the Treasury, very inaccurately stated, for the purpose of protection, but merely with a view to the increase of the revenue. But the parties interested, and who sought the abrogation of this law, were always told: “You have no right to object to that duty, so long as you require that the produce of the British wool-grower should be confined to the consumption of this country,” (Hear.) It was never concealed, either in this House, or from the persons engaged in the trade; we constantly said, “If you will consent to the removal of that impolitic restriction, as we consider it, upon the export of British wool, we will propose in Parliament the repeal of the duty.” The discussion of this subject led to a good deal of communication, in the last year, with the manufacturing interests, in different parts of the country: they held meetings, at which various resolutions were adopted: as may be supposed, it was found in the result, that there existed a discordance of opinion on the question at issue. Some were disposed to think that the repeal of the duty would be less of a benefit to them, than the removal of the restriction would be an evil; they were therefore desirous that the matter should be left just as it stands, and that no alteration should be made; they were anxious indeed to get rid of the duty, but not at the expense of the loss of the protection they imagined the restriction afforded them. Undoubtedly, however, a majority, I may say a decided majority, of the interests concerned in the woollen trade, were of opinion, that it would be beneficial to them to accede to that sort of compromise, that the duty should be repealed, and a free export of the article permitted. I confess, on the best and most deliberate view I have been able to take of the subject, I cannot see what reasonable objection there can be to adopt such a plan. (Hear, hear.) Certainly, a part of the plan I shall submit to Parliament, will be, to reduce the duty on foreign wool, from 6d. per pound, which it is at present, to 1d. per pound, as it was originally before the bill of 1819. I shall then recommend that British wool be allowed to be exported, on the payment of a small duty of 1d. also, to put them upon a level, and to keep the balance even between the two. Thus shall we sweep away needless, and, as I think, injuri-

ous statutes of restriction, and not merely those, but penalties, oaths, and Heaven knows what besides. (Hear, hear.) All of these are exceedingly inconvenient, and, what is more, they do no possible good. Thus, the whole trade will be put upon a footing, which, I am quite confident, will turn out to be most beneficial to both parties—the grower of British wool and the manufacturer of the foreign article. On that matter I feel none of the apprehensions which at times have been expressed by both parties. I am satisfied that the consequence of the change will be a great extension of our woollen trade to every quarter of the world; and it is beyond my comprehension to imagine how such a state of things can be otherwise than advantageous to those who sell the raw material—(Hear!)—therefore I see nothing but good to result from the repeal of the duty, and the removal of the restriction; and I hope that, in endeavoring to accomplish this object, I shall be supported by the House. (Much cheering.) The loss I anticipate to the revenue from such a proceeding, is 350,000*l.* per annum. The next item to which I shall call the attention of the Committee, is one which, I own, appears to be of paramount importance in this view of the subject. I mean in that view of the subject which relates to the removal of restrictions. I allude to the item of silk. (Hear.) This trade is thus circumstanced: there is a very high duty on the raw material, and a positive prohibition of the consumption of the foreign manufactured article. I will, with the leave of the Committee, take the latter first; and, in the outset, I should wish to ask, where is the advantage of retaining the prohibitory system. (Hear, hear.) Where is the advantage of retaining it, looking at it either with reference to our intercourse with other nations, or with reference to our own domestic interests? (Hear.) For some years past there has certainly prevailed in this country, among its ablest statesmen and our most eminent writers, I should say, indeed, among all men of sense and reflection, a decided conviction that the maintenance of this prohibitory system is exceedingly impolitic. We have recently made a certain progress towards the removal of the evil. Are we to stop short? If we do stop short, what will foreign nations say, and justly say, of our conduct? Will they not say, that, though we profess liberality, we hate it in our hearts? that we have been endeavoring to cajole them to admit our own manufactures into their territories, while we continue rigidly by every means in our power, and by adhering closely to an antiquated system, to exclude theirs? When our practice is so at variance with our professions, it is impossible that they should give any credit to our assertions. Whenever a foreign state imposes a new duty on any of our manufactures, my right honorable friend, the President of the Board of Trade, is assaulted by representations from all quarters; instant measures are to be adopted to get the duty removed, and we are to remonstrate with the foreign power against its continuance. What would be the consequence? Our Ambassador is instructed to state to the foreign court at which he resides, that the new duty imposed is very injurious to British interests, and is viewed by this country in an unfriendly light. The answer of the foreign minister of course must be—“It may be so; we cannot help it; for how can we admit your goods, if you do not admit ours?” With such a reply, the British Ambassador must make his bow and retire, discomfited and ashamed; and I defy the ingenuity of man to invent an argument to refute the powerful *argumentum ad hominem* of the foreign minister. Other countries must conclude that we are only attempting to delude them; that it is all pretence and hypocrisy on our part; and that we do not really believe, that there is practical soundness in the principles we abstractedly recommend. I myself am well satisfied of the practical soundness of those principles, and that we ought to take the first opportunity of adopting them. (Hear, hear.) There never was so favorable an opportunity as the present for carrying our principles into effect, and for inviting foreign powers to act in accordance with them. Let us invite them to join with us in cutting the cords that tie down commerce to the earth, that it may soar aloft, unconfined and unrestricted. (Hear, hear.) If ever an opportunity for accomplishing this great good was afforded, it is the moment when I am speaking—and for God’s sake let us embrace it. Are not our manufactures now in a state of universal activity? Is not



every thing in a condition of improvement? And is not capital in eager search of the means by which it may be profitably expended? (Hear, hear.) We have thus the finest opportunity for emancipating ourselves from ancient prejudices, and for making a new start in the race of wealth and prosperity. (Hear, hear.) On these grounds I am anxious to propose the adoption of this liberal system. But give me leave to ask, if there are not many others independent of those merely of a commercial nature, which strongly support it? In the first place, is it not perfectly well known, that, after all, these prohibitions, guard them and fence them with laws as you will, are, in point of fact evaded. (Hear, hear.) I remember, and I dare say many others have not forgotten, when the Hon. Member for Aberdeen, last year, even in this place, produced his Bandana handkerchief: he triumphantly unfurled the standard of smuggling; he hoisted, as it were, the colors of opposition to the Government and its laws, and having complacently blown his nose upon them, he returned them to his pocket (Cheering and laughter.) He might not know at the time, though I reminded him of it afterwards, that there was not a gentleman near him at the time who had not a right to take possession of that handkerchief and export it to a foreign country. (Hear.) I mention this fact only as a strong practical illustration of the utter impossibility of carrying these prohibitions into complete effect. Every body who has been on some parts of the coast, has seen foreign vessels coming in from the neighboring continent, and has, no doubt, often observed females step out of them, apparently of the most uncomfortable corpulency. In due time, and without any surgical aid, they were safely delivered of their burdens, and were restored to the natural slimness of their graceful figures. (Laughter.) Such I believe to be a very common practice; and there is, in fact, no end to the ingenuity of the devices to introduce contraband articles. Not only ingenuity is displayed, but fraud and crime—perjury, and every possible evil moral consequence. We all know, that crime begets crime; that, in whatever it may begin, *a progenies vitiosior* always springs up; *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus*; and a man who begins as a smuggler will probably end as something much worse. Perhaps he smuggles in the first instance only with the innocent purpose of making a present to a female friend or relative; but when a man is accustomed to the violation of the law, he will not find it very difficult, by degrees, to go further. He finds that he cannot effect his object without concealment—he takes a false oath, and becomes familiarized to that species of perjury. He commences by presents; then thinks he may turn the practice to pecuniary advantage; he smuggles upon a larger scale; he extends his adventures, and instead of gloves, shoes, or silks, he tries the experiment of more valuable articles. He makes money, and in time is induced to embark in more desperate and more criminal speculations. What is the consequence? You are obliged to keep up a navy to prevent contraband trade, a circumstance alluded to on a former night. Battle and bloodshed ensue—the loss of life, and perhaps deliberate murder. All this is very melancholy, and yet for what is it incurred? Under the fanciful notion that it is for the interest of the silk manufacture of this country. Why, Lord bless me, Sir, we know very well, after all, that the British silk manufacture is so highly thought of abroad at this moment, that, I believe, if a market were open where the goods of this kingdom should compete with those of any other, the British goods would drive all rivalship out of the field. (Hear, hear, hear.) If this be so, there is not the slightest pretence for saying that, to change the system, would be to injure our silk manufactures. Let us accompany it with a reduction of duty on the raw article, and there is not a foreign country that will not be glad to take our manufactured silks. I, therefore, hope that the House will think it full time to throw down this hollow, gilded, and distorted idol of imaginary protection; to hurl it from its base, and to establish on the same foundation the well-proportioned statue of commercial liberty. (Hear, hear, hear.)”



AN

# ORATION

Pronounced at Cambridge,

BEFORE

THE SOCIETY OF PHI BETA KAPPA.

AUGUST 26, 1824.



PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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BY EDWARD EVERETT.

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OLIVER EVERETT, 13 CORNHILL.

1824.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, ss.

*District Clerk's Office.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eleventh day of September, in the forty-ninth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Oliver Everett, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit :

“ An Oration pronounced at Cambridge, before the Society of Phi Beta Kappa. August 26, 1824. Published by request. By Edward Everett.”

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled “ An Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned.” And also to an Act, entitled “ an Act, supplementary to an Act, entitled an Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.”

JNO. W. DAVIS,  
Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

TO MAJOR GENERAL

LA FAYETTE,

THIS Oration, delivered in his presence, is  
respectfully and affectionately dedicated by

*THE AUTHOR.*

NOTE. A few passages omitted in the delivering of this Address, on account of its length, are inserted in the printed copy.

# Oration.



MR PRESIDENT, AND GENTLEMEN,

IN discharging the honorable trust of being the public organ of your sentiments on this occasion, I have been anxious that the hour, which we here pass together, should be occupied by those reflections exclusively, which belong to us as scholars. Our association in this fraternity is academical ; we engaged in it before our alma mater dismissed us from her venerable roof, to wander in the various paths of life ; and we have now come together in the academical holidays, from every variety of pursuit, from almost every part of our country, to meet on common ground, as the brethren of one literary household. The professional cares of life, like the conflicting tribes of Greece, have proclaimed to us a short

armistice, that we may come up in peace to our Olympia.

But from the wide field of literary speculation, and the innumerable subjects of meditation which arise in it, a selection must be made. And it has seemed to me proper that we should direct our thoughts, not merely to a subject of interest to scholars, but to one, which may recommend itself as peculiarly appropriate to us. If 'that old man eloquent, whom the dishonest victory at Cheronæa killed with report,' could devote fifteen years to the composition of his Panegyric on Athens, I shall need no excuse to a society of American scholars, in choosing for the theme of an address on an occasion like this, *the peculiar motives to intellectual exertion in America*. In this subject that curiosity, which every scholar feels in tracing and comparing the springs of mental activity, is heightened and dignified, by the important connexion of the inquiry with the condition and prospects of our native land.

In the full comprehension of the terms, the motives to intellectual exertion in a country embrace the most important springs of national character. Pursued into its details, the study



of these springs of national character is often little better than fanciful speculation. The questions, why Asia has almost always been the abode of despotism; and Europe more propitious to liberty; why the Egyptians were abject and melancholy; the Greeks inventive, elegant, and versatile; the Romans stern, saturnine, and, in matters of literature, for the most part servile imitators of a people, whom they conquered, despised, and never equalled; why tribes of barbarians from the north and east, not known to differ essentially from each other at the time of their settlement in Europe, should have laid the foundation of national characters so dissimilar, as those of the Spanish, French, German, and English nations; these are questions to which a few general answers may be attempted, that will probably be just and safe, only in proportion as they are vague and comprehensive. Difficult as it is, even in the individual man, to point out precisely the causes, under the influence of which members of the same community and of the same family, placed apparently in the same circumstances, grow up with characters the most diverse; it is infinitely more difficult to perform the same analysis on a subject so vast as a na-

tion ; where it is first not a small question what the character is, before you touch the inquiry into the circumstances by which it was formed.

But as, in the case of individual character, there are certain causes of undisputed and powerful operation ; there are also in national character causes equally undisputed of improvement and excellence, on the one hand, and of degeneracy and decline, on the other. The philosophical student of history, the impartial observer of man, may often fix on circumstances, which in their operation on the minds of the people, in furnishing the motives and giving the direction to intellectual exertion, have had the chief agency in making them what they were or are. Nor are there many exercises of the speculative principle more elevated than this. It is in the highest degree curious to trace physical facts into their political, intellectual, and moral consequences ; and to show how the climate, the geographical position, and even the particular topography of a region connect themselves by evident association, with the state of society, its predominating pursuits, and characteristic institutions. ✓

✓In the case of other nations, particularly of

those which in the great drama of the world have long since passed from the stage, these speculations are often only curious. The operation of a tropical climate in enervating and fitting a people for despotism ; the influence of a broad river or a lofty chain of mountains, in arresting the march of conquest or of emigration, and thus becoming the boundary not merely of governments, but of languages, literature, institutions, and character ; the effect of a quarry of fine marble on the progress of the liberal arts ; the agency of popular institutions in promoting popular eloquence, and the tremendous reaction of popular eloquence on the fortunes of a state ; the comparative destiny of colonial settlements, of insular states, of tribes fortified in nature's Alpine battlements, or scattered over a smiling region of olive gardens and vineyards ; these are all topics indeed of rational curiosity and liberal speculation, but important only as they may illustrate the prospects of our own country.

It is therefore when we turn the inquiry to our country, when we survey its features, search its history, and contemplate its institutions, to see what the motives are, which are to excite and

guide the minds of the people ; when we dwell not on a distant, an uncertain, an almost forgotten past ; but on an impending future, teeming with life and action, toward which we are rapidly and daily swept forward, and with which we stand in the dearest connexion, which can bind the generations of man together ; a future, which our own characters, our own actions, our own principles will do something to stamp with glory or shame ; it is then that the inquiry becomes practical, momentous, and worthy the attention of every patriotic scholar. We then strive, as far as it is in the power of philosophical investigation to do it, to unfold our country's reverend auspices, to cast its great horoscope in the national sky, where many stars are waning, and many have set ; to ascertain whether the soil which we love, as that where our fathers are laid and we shall presently be laid with them, will be trod in times to come by a people virtuous, enlightened, and free.

The first of the circumstances which are acting and will continue to act, with a strong peculiarity among us, and which must prove one of the most powerful influences, in exciting and directing the intellect of the country, is the new

form of civil society, which has here been devised and established. I shall not wander so far from the *literary* limits of this occasion, nor into a field so oft trodden, as the praises of free political institutions. But the direct and appropriate influence on mental effort of institutions like ours, has not yet, perhaps, received the attention, which, from every American scholar, it richly deserves. I have ventured to say, that a new form of civil society has here been devised and established. The ancient Grecian republics, indeed, were free enough within the walls of the single city, of which most of them were wholly or chiefly composed; but to these single cities the freedom, as well as the power, was confined. Toward the confederated or tributary states, the government was generally a despotism, more capricious and not less stern, than that of a single tyrant. Rome as a state was never free; in every period of her history, authentic and dubious, royal, republican, and imperial, her proud citizens were the slaves of an artful, accomplished, wealthy aristocracy; and nothing but the hard fought battles of her stern tribunes can redeem her memory to the friends

of liberty. In ancient and modern history there is no example, before our own, of a purely elective and representative system. It is therefore, on an entirely novel plan, that, in this country, the whole direction and influence of affairs ; all the trusts and honors of society ; the power of making, abrogating, and administering the laws ; the whole civil authority and sway, from the highest post in the government to the smallest village trust, are put directly into the market of merit. Whatsoever efficacy there is in high station and exalted honors, to call out and exercise the powers, either by awakening the emulation of the aspirants or exciting the efforts of the incumbents, is here directly exerted on the largest mass of men, with the smallest possible deductions. Nothing is bestowed on the chance of birth, nothing depends on proximity to the fountain of honor, nothing is to be acquired by espousing hereditary family interests ; but whatever is desired must be sought in the way of a broad, fair, personal competition. It requires little argument to show, that such a system must most widely and most powerfully have the effect of appealing to whatever of energy the land

contains ; of searching out, with magnetic instinct, in the remotest quarters, the latent ability of its children.

It may be objected, and it has been, that for want of a hereditary government, we lose that powerful spring of action which resides in the patronage of such a government, and must emanate from the crown. With many individuals, friendly to our popular institutions, it is nevertheless an opinion, that we must consent to lose something of the genial influence of princely and royal patronage on letters and arts, and find our consolation in the political benefits of our free system. It may be doubted, however, whether this view be not entirely false. A crown is in itself a strip of velvet set with jewels ; the dignity which it imparts and the honor with which it is invested, depend on the numbers, resources, and intelligence of the people who permit it to be worn. The crown of the late emperor of Hayti, is said to have been one of the most brilliant in the world ; and Theodore of Corsica, while confined for debt in the Fleet in London, sat on as high a throne as the king of England. Since then the power and influ-

ence of the crown are really in the people, it seems preposterous to say, that what increases the importance of the people can diminish the effect of that, which proceeds from them, depends upon them, and reverts to them. Sovereignty, in all its truth and efficacy, exists here, as much as ever it did at London, at Paris, at Rome, or at Susa. It exists, it is true, in an equal proportionate diffusion; a part of it belongs to the humblest citizen. The error seems to be in confounding the idea of sovereignty, with the quality of an individual sovereign. Wheresoever Providence gathers into a nation the tribes of men, there a social life, with its energies and functions, is conferred; and this social life is sovereignty. By the healthful action of our representative system, it is made to pervade the empire like the air; to reach the farthest, descend to the lowest, and bind the distant together; it is made not only to cooperate with the successful and assist the prosperous, but to cheer the remote, 'to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken.' Before the rising of our republic in the world, the faculties of men have had but one weary pilgrimage to perform—to travel up



to court. By an improvement on the Jewish polity, which enjoined on the nation a visit thrice a year to the holy city; the great, the munificent, the enlightened states of the ancient and modern world have required a constant residence on the chosen spot. *Provincial* has become another term for inferior and rude; and *unpolite*, which once meant only *rural*, has got to signify, in all our languages, something little better than barbarous. But since, in the nature of things, a small part only of the population of a large state can, by physical possibility, be crowded within the walls of a city, and there receive the genial beams of metropolitan favor, it follows that the great mass of men are cut off from the operation of some of the strongest excitements to exertion. It is rightfully urged then, as a great advantage of our system, that the excitements of society go down as low as its burdens, and search out and bring forward whatsoever of ability and zeal are comprehended within the limits of the land. This is but the beginning of the benefit, or rather it is not yet the benefit. It is the effect of this diffusion of privileges that is precious. Capacity and op-

portunity, the twin sisters, who can scarce subsist but with each other, are now brought together. The people who are to choose, and from whose number are to be chosen, by their neighbors, the highest officers of state, infallibly feel an impulse to mental activity ; they read, think, and compare ; they found village schools, they collect social libraries, they prepare their children for the higher establishments of education. The world, I think, has been abused on the tendency of institutions perfectly popular. From the ill-organized states of antiquity, terrific examples of license and popular misrule are quoted, to prove that man requires to be protected from himself, without asking who is to protect him from the protector, himself also a man. While from the very first settlement of America to the present day, the most prominent trait of our character has been to cherish and diffuse the means of education. The village schoolhouse, and the village church, are the monuments, which the American people have erected to their freedom ; to read, and write, and think, are the licentious practices, which have characterised our democracy.

But it will be urged perhaps, that, though the effect of our institutions be to excite the intellect of the nation, they excite it too much in a political direction; that the division and subdivision of the country into states and districts, and the equal diffusion throughout them of political privileges and powers, whatever favorable effect in other ways they may produce, are attended by this evil,—that they kindle a political ambition, where it would not and ought not be felt; and particularly that they are unfriendly in their operation on literature, as they call the aspiring youth, from the patient and laborious vigils of the student, to plunge prematurely into the conflicts of the Forum. It may, however, be doubted, whether there be any foundation whatever for a charge like this; and whether the fact, so far as it is one, that the talent and ambition of the country incline, at present, to a political course, be not owing to causes wholly unconnected, with the free character of our institutions. It need not be said that the administration of the government of a country, whether it be liberal or despotic, is the first thing to be provided for. Some persons must be employed in making and administering

the laws, before any other interest can receive attention. Our fathers, the pilgrims, before they left the vessel, in which for five months they had been tossed on the ocean, before setting foot on the new world of their desire, drew up a simple constitution of government. As this is the first care in the order of nature, it ever retains its paramount importance. Society must be preserved in its constituted forms, or there is no safety for life, no security for property, no permanence for any institution civil, moral, or religious. The first efforts then of social men are of necessity political. Apart from every call of ambition, honorable or selfish, of interest enlarged or mercenary, the care of the government is the first care of a civilized community. In the early stages of social progress, where there is little property and a scanty population, the whole strength of the society must be employed in its support and defence. Though *we* are constantly receding from these stages we have not wholly left them. Even our rapidly increasing population is and will for some time remain small, compared with the space over which it is diffused; and this, with the total absence of large hereditary fortunes,

will create a demand for political services, on the one hand, and a necessity of rendering them on the other. There is then no ground for ascribing the political tendency of the talent and activity of this country, to an imagined incompatibility of popular institutions with the profound cultivation of letters. Suppose our government were changed tomorrow; that the five points of a stronger government were introduced, a hereditary sovereign, an order of nobility, an established church, a standing army, and a vigilant police; and that these should take place of that admirable system, which now, like the genial air, pervades all, supports all, cheers all, and is nowhere seen. Suppose this change made, and other circumstances to remain the same; our population no more dense, our boundaries as wide, and the accumulation of private wealth no more abundant. Would there, in the new state of things, be less interest in politics? By the terms of the supposition, the leading class of the community, the nobles, are to be politicians by birth. By the nature of the case, a large portion of the remainder, who gain their livelihood by their industry and talents, would be engrossed, not

indeed in the free political competition, which now prevails, but in pursuing the interests of rival court factions. One class only, the peasantry, would remain, which would take less interest in politics than the corresponding class in a free state; or rather, this is a new class, which invariably comes in with a strong government; and no one can seriously think the cause of science and literature would be promoted, by substituting an European peasantry, in the place of, perhaps, the most substantial uncorrupted population on earth, the American yeomanry. Moreover the evil in question is with us a self-correcting evil. If the career of politics be more open, and the temptation to crowd it stronger, competition will spring up, numbers will engage in the pursuit; the less able, the less industrious, the less ambitious must retire, and leave the race to the swift and the battle to the strong. But in hereditary governments no such remedy exists. One class of society, by the nature of its position, must be rulers, magistrates, or politicians. Weak or strong, willing or unwilling they must play the game, though they as well as the people pay the bitter forfeit. The obnoxious king can

seldom shake off the empoisoned purple ; he must wear the crown of thorns, till it is struck off at the scaffold ; and the same artificial necessity has obliged generations of nobles, in all the old states of Europe, to toil and bleed for a

Power too great to keep or to resign.

Where the compulsion stops short of these afflicting extremities, still, under the governments in question, a large portion of the community is unavoidably destined to the calling of the courtier, the soldier, the party retainer ; to a life of service, intrigue, and court attendance ; and thousands, and those the prominent individuals in society, are brought up to look on a livelihood gained by private industry as base ; on study as the pedant's trade, on labor as the badge of slavery. I look in vain in institutions like these, for any thing essentially favorable to intellectual progress. On the contrary, while they must draw away the talent and ambition of the country, quite as much as popular institutions can do it, into pursuits foreign from the culture of the intellect, they necessarily doom to obscurity no small part of the mental energy of the land. For that mental energy has been equally

diffused by sterner levellers than ever marched in the van of a Revolution ; the nature of man and the Providence of God. Native character, strength and quickness of mind, are not of the number of distinctions and accomplishments, that human institutions can monopolize within a city's walls. In quiet times, they remain and perish in the obscurity, to which a false organization of society consigns them. In dangerous, convulsed, and trying times, they spring up in the fields, in the village hamlets, and on the mountain tops, and teach the surprised favorites of human law, that bright eyes, skilful hands, quick perceptions, firm purpose, and brave hearts, are not the exclusive *appanage* of courts. Our popular institutions are favorable to intellectual improvement because their foundation is in dear nature. They do not consign the greater part of the social frame to torpidity and mortification. They send out a vital nerve to every member of the community, by which its talent and power, great or small, are brought into living conjunction and strong sympathy with the kindred intellect of the nation ; and every impression on every part vibrates with electric rapidity through the whole. They



encourage nature to perfect her work ; they make education, the soul's nutriment, cheap ; they bring up remote and shrinking talent into the cheerful field of competition ; in a thousand ways they provide an audience for lips, which nature has touched with persuasion ; they put a lyre into the hands of genius ; they bestow on all who deserve it or seek it, the only patronage worth having, the only patronage that ever struck out a spark of 'celestial fire,'—the patronage of fair opportunity. This is a day of improved education ; new systems of teaching are devised ; modes of instruction, choice of studies, adaptation of text books, the whole machinery of means, have been brought in our day under severe revision. But were I to attempt to point out the most efficacious and comprehensive improvement in education, the engine, by which the greatest portion of mind could be brought and kept under cultivation, the discipline which would reach farthest, sink deepest, and cause the word of instruction, not to spread over the surface like an artificial hue, carefully laid on, but to penetrate to the heart and soul of its objects, it would be popular institutions. Give the people an object in promoting educa-

tion, and the best methods will infallibly be suggested by that instinctive ingenuity of our nature, which provides means for great and precious ends. Give the people an object in promoting education, and the worn hand of labor will be opened to the last farthing, that its children may enjoy means denied to itself. This great contest about black boards and sand tables will then lose something of its importance, and even the exalted names of Bell and Lancaster may sink from that very lofty height, where an over hasty admiration has placed them.

But though it be conceded to us that the tendency, which is alleged to exist in this country toward the political career, is not a vicious effect of our free institutions, still it may be inquired, whether the new form of social organization among us is at least to produce no corresponding modification of our literature? As the country advances, as the population becomes denser, as wealth accumulates, as the various occasions of a large, prosperous, and polite community call into strong action and vigorous competition the literary talent of the country, will no peculiar form or direction be

given to its literature, by the nature of its institutions? To this question an answer must, without hesitation, be given in the affirmative. Literature as well in its origin, as in its true and only genuine character, is but a more perfect communication of man with man and mind with mind. It is a grave, sustained, deliberate utterance of fact, of opinion, and feeling; or a free and happy reflection of nature, of character, or of manners; and if it be not these it is poor imitation. It may, therefore, be assumed as certain, that the peculiarity of our condition and institutions will be reflected in some peculiarity of our literature; but what that shall be it is as yet too early to say.\* Literary history informs us of many studies, which have been ne-

\* The peculiar natural features of the American Continent are of themselves sufficient to produce some strong peculiarity in its literature, but this topic is comprehensive and curious enough for a separate Essay. It has, I am permitted to say, been made the subject of one, by M. de Salazar the minister from the Colombian Republic to the United States, which will shortly be presented to the friends of American letters. An essay on such a subject, from an accomplished citizen of a free State, established in the kingdom of Neuva Granada, is itself an admirable illustration of the genial influence of popular institutions on Intellectual Improvement.

glected as dangerous to existing governments ; and many others which have been cultivated because they were prudent and safe. We have hardly the means of settling from analogy, what direction the mind will most decisively take, when left under strong excitements to action, wholly without restraint from the arm of power. It is impossible to anticipate what garments our native muses will weave for themselves. To foretell our literature would be to create it. There was a time before an epic poem, a tragedy, or a historical composition had ever been produced by the wit of man. It was a time of vast and powerful empires, of populous and wealthy cities. But these new and beautiful forms of human thought and feeling all sprang up in Greece, under the *stimulus* of her free institutions. Before they appeared in the world, it would have been idle for the philosopher to form conjectures, as to the direction, which the kindling genius of the age was to assume. He, who could form, could and would realise the anticipation, and it would cease to be an anticipation. Assuredly epic poetry was invented then and not before, when the gorgeous vision of the Iliad, not in its full detail of circumstance, but

in the dim conception of its leading scenes and sterner features, burst into the soul of Homer. Impossible, indeed, were the task fully to foretell the progress of the mind, under the influence of institutions as new, as peculiar, and far more animating, than those of Greece. But if, as no one will deny, our political system bring more minds into action on equal terms, if it provide a prompter circulation of thought throughout the community, if it give weight and emphasis to more voices, if it swell to tens of thousands and millions those 'sons of emulation, who crowd the narrow strait where honor travels,' then it seems not too much to expect some peculiarity at least, if we may not call it improvement, in that literature, which is but the voice and utterance of all this mental action. There is little doubt that the instrument of communication itself will receive great improvements; that the written and spoken language will acquire force and power; possibly, that forms of address, wholly new, will be struck out, to meet the universal demand for new energy. When the improvement or the invention (whatever it be) comes, it will come unlooked for, as well to its happy author as the world. But where great

interests are at stake, great concerns rapidly succeeding each other, depending on almost innumerable wills, and yet requiring to be apprehended in a glance, and explained in a word; where movements are to be given to a vast empire, not by transmitting orders, but by diffusing opinions, exciting feelings, and touching the electric chord of sympathy, there language and expression will become intense, and the old processes of communication must put on a vigor and a directness, adapted to the aspect of the times. Our country is called, as it is, practical; but this is the element for intellectual action. No strongly marked and high toned literature; poetry, eloquence, or ethics; ever appeared but in the pressure, the din, and crowd of great interests, great enterprises, perilous risks, and dazzling rewards. Statesmen, and warriors, and poets, and orators, and artists, start up under one and the same excitement. They are all branches of one stock. They form, and cheer, and stimulate, and, what is worth all the rest, understand each other; and it is as truly the sentiment of the student, in the recesses of his cell, as of the soldier in the ranks, which breathes in the exclamation:

'To all the sons of sense proclaim,  
 One glorious hour of *crowded life*  
 Is worth an age without a name.

But we are brought back to the unfavorable aspect of the subject, by being reminded out of history of the splendid patronage, which arbitrary governments have bestowed on letters, and which, from the nature of the case, can hardly be extended even to the highest merit, under institutions like our own. We are told of the munificent pensions, the rich establishments, the large foundations; of the museums erected, the libraries gathered, the endowments granted, by Ptolemies, Augustuses, and Louises of ancient and modern days. We are asked to remark the fruit of this noble patronage; wonders of antiquarian or scientific lore, Thesauruses and Corpuses, efforts of erudition from which the emulous student, who would read all things, weigh all things, surpass all things, recoils in horror; volumes and shelves of volumes, before which meek-eyed patience folds her hands in despair.

When we have contemplated these things, and turn our thoughts back to our poor republican land, to our frugal treasury, and the caution

with which it is dispensed; to our modest fortunes, and the thrift with which they are hoarded; to our scanty public libraries, and the plain brick walls within which they are deposited: we may be apt to form gloomy auguries of the influence of free political institutions on our literature. It is important then, that we examine more carefully the experience of former ages, and see how far their institutions, as they have been more or less popular, have been more or less associated with displays of intellectual excellence. When we make this examination, we shall be gratified to find, that the precedents are all in favor of liberty. The greatest efforts of human genius have been made, where the nearest approach to free institutions has taken place. There shone not forth one ray of intellectual light, to cheer the long and gloomy ages of the Memphian and Babylonian despots. Not a historian, not an orator, not a poet is heard of in their annals. When you ask, what was achieved by the generations of thinking beings, the millions of men, whose natural genius was as bright as that of the Greeks, nay, who forestalled the Greeks in the first invention of many of the arts, you are told that they built the pyra-



mids of Memphis, the temples of Thebes, and the tower of Babylon, and carried Sesostris and Ninus upon their shoulders, from the West of Africa to the Indus. Mark the contrast in Greece. With the first emerging of that country into the light of political liberty, the poems of Homer appear. Some centuries of political misrule and literary darkness follow, and then the great constellation of their geniuses seems to rise at once. The stormy eloquence and the deep philosophy, the impassioned drama and the grave history, were all produced for the entertainment of that 'fierce democratic' of Athens. Here then the genial influence of liberty on letters is strongly put to the test. Athens was certainly a free state; free to licentiousness, free to madness. The rich were arbitrarily pillaged to defray the expenses of the state, the great were banished to appease the envy of their rivals, the wise sacrificed to the fury of the populace. It was a state, in short, where liberty existed with most of the imperfections, which have led men to love and praise despotism. Still, however, it was for this lawless, merciless people, that the most chastised and accomplished literature, which the world has

known, was produced. The philosophy of Plato was the attraction, which drew to a morning's walk in the olive gardens of the academy, the young men of this factious city. Those tumultuous assemblies of Athens, the very same, which rose in their wrath, and to a man, and clamored for the blood of Phocion, required to be addressed, not in the cheap extemporaneous rant of modern demagogues, but in the elaborate and thrice repeated orations of Demosthenes. No! the noble and elegant arts of Greece grew up in no Augustan age, enjoyed neither royal nor imperial patronage. Unknown before in the world, strangers on the Nile, and strangers on the Euphrates, they sprang at once into life in a region not unlike our own New England—iron bound, sterile, and free. The imperial astronomers of Chaldæa went up almost to the stars in their observatories; but it was a Greek, who first foretold an eclipse, and measured the year. The nations of the East invented the alphabet, but not a line has reached us of profane literature, in any of their languages; and it is owing to the embalming power of Grecian genius, that the invention itself has been transmitted to the world. The Egyptian architects

could erect structures, which after three thousand five hundred years are still standing, in their uncouth original majesty ; but it was only on the barren soil of Attica, that the beautiful columns of the Parthenon and the Theseum could rest, which are standing also. With the decline of liberty in Greece, began the decline of all her letters and all her arts ; though her tumultuous democracies were succeeded by liberal and accomplished princes. Compare the literature of the Alexandrian with that of the Periclean age ; how cold, pedantic, and imitative ! Compare, I will not say, the axes, the eggs, the altars, and the other frigid devices of the pensioned wits in the museum at Alexandria, but compare their best spirits with those of independent Greece ; Callimachus with Pindar, Lycophron with Sophocles, Aristophanes of Byzantium with Aristotle, and Apollonius the Rhodian with Homer. When we descend to Rome, to the Augustan age, the exalted era of Mæcenas, we find one uniform work of imitation, often of translation. The choicest geniuses seldom rise beyond a happy transfusion of the Grecian masters. Horace translates Alcæus, Terence translates Menander, Lucretius translates Epicu-

rus, Virgil translates Homer, and Cicero—I had almost said, translates Demosthenes and Plato. But the soul of liberty did burst forth from the lips of Cicero, ‘her form had not yet lost all its original brightness,’ her inspiration produced in him the only specimens of a purely original literature, which Rome has transmitted to us. After him, their literary history is written in one line of Tacitus; *gliscente adulatione, magna ingenia deterrebantur*. The fine arts revived a little under the princes of the Flavian house, but never rose higher than a successful imitation of the waning excellence of Greece. With the princes of this line, the arts of Rome expired, and Constantine the great was obliged to tear down an arch of Trajan for sculptures, wherewithal to adorn his own. In modern times civilized states have multiplied; political institutions have varied in different states, and at different times in the same state; some liberal institutions have existed in the bosom of societies otherwise despotic; and a great addition of new studies has been made to the encyclopædia, which have all been cultivated by great minds, and some of which, as the physical and experimental sciences, have little or no direct

connexion with the state of liberty. These circumstances perplex, in some degree, the inquiry into the effect of free institutions on intellectual improvement in modern times. There are times and places, where it would seem, that the muses, both the gay and the severe, had been transformed into court ladies. Upon the whole, however, the modern history of literature bears but a cold testimony to the genial influence of the governments, under which it has grown up. Dante and Petrarch composed their beautiful works in exile; Boccaccio complains in the most celebrated of his, that he was transfixed with the darts of envy and calumny; Machiavelli was pursued by the party of the Medici for resisting their tyrannical designs; Guicciardini retired in disgust to compose his history in voluntary exile; Galileo confessed in the prisons of the Inquisition, that the earth did not move; Ariosto lived in poverty; and Tasso died in want and despair.\* Cervantes, after he had immortalized himself in his great work, was obliged to write on for bread. The whole

\* Martinelli, in his Edition of the Decamerone, cited in the Introduction to Sidney's Discourses on Government, Edition of 1751, p. 34.

French academy was pensioned to crush the great Corneille. Racine, after living to see his finest pieces derided as cold and worthless, died of a broken heart. The divine genius of Shakespeare raised him to no higher rank than that of a subaltern actor in his own, and Ben Jonson's plays. The immortal Chancellor was sacrificed to the preservation of a worthless minion, and is said, (falsely I trust,) to have begged a cup of beer in his old age, and begged it in vain. The most valuable of the pieces of Selden were written in that famous resort of great minds, the tower of London. Milton, surprised by want in his infirm old age, sold the first production of the human mind for five pounds. The great boast of English philosophy was expelled from his place in Oxford, and kept in banishment, 'the king having been given to understand,' to use the words of Lord Sunderland, who ordered the expulsion, 'that *one Locke* has, upon several occasions, behaved himself very factiously against the government.' Dryden sacrificed his genius to the spur of immediate want. Otway was choked with a morsel of bread, too ravenously swallowed after a long fast. Johnson was taken to prison for a debt of five shillings;

and Burke petitioned for a Professorship at Glasgow and was denied. When we survey these facts and the innumerable others, of which these are not even an adequate specimen, we may perhaps conclude that, in whatever way the arbitrary governments of Europe have encouraged letters, it has not been in that of a steady cheering patronage. We may think there is abundant reason to acknowledge, that the ancient lesson is confirmed by modern experience, and that popular institutions are most propitious to the full and prosperous growth of intellectual excellence.

If the perfectly organized system of liberty, which here prevails, be thus favorable to intellectual progress, various other conditions of our national existence are not less so, particularly the extension of one language, government, and character, over so vast a space as the United States of America. Hitherto, in the main, the world has seen but two forms of social existence, free governments in small states, and arbitrary governments in large ones. Though various shades of both have appeared, at different times, in the world, yet on the whole, the politi-

cal ingenuity of man has never found out the mode of extending liberal institutions beyond small districts, or of governing large empires, by any other means, than the visible demonstration and exercise of absolute power. The effect in either case has been unpropitious to the growth of intellectual excellence. Free institutions, though favorable to the growth of intellectual excellence, are not the only thing needed. The wandering savage is free, but most of the powers of his mind lie dormant, under the severe privations of a barbarous life. An infant colony, on a distant coast, may be free, but for want of the necessary mental aliment and excitement, may be unable to rise above the limits of material existence. In order then that free institutions may have their full and entire effect, in producing the highest attainable degree of intellectual improvement, they require to be established in an extensive region, and over a numerous people. This constitutes a state of society entirely new among men ; a vast empire whose institutions are wholly popular. While we experience the genial influence of those principles, which belong to all free states, and in proportion as they are free ; independence of



thought, and the right of expressing it ; we are to feel in this country, we and those who succeed us, all that excitement, which, in various ways, arises from the reciprocal action upon each other of the parts of a great empire. Literature, as has been partly hinted, is the voice of the age and the state. The character, energy, and resources of the country, are reflected and imaged forth in the conceptions of its great minds. They are the organs of the time ; they speak not their own language, they scarce think their own thoughts ; but under an impulse like the prophetic enthusiasm of old, they must feel and utter the sentiments, which society inspires. They do not create, they obey the Spirit of the Age ; the serene and beautiful spirit descended from the highest heaven of liberty, who laughs at our little preconceptions, and, with the breath of his mouth, sweeps before him the men and the nations, that cross his path. By an unconscious instinct, the mind in the strong action of its powers, adapts itself to the number and complexion of the other minds, with which it is to enter into communion or conflict. As the voice falls into the key, which is suited to the space to be filled, the mind, in the various exercises

of its creative faculties, strives with curious search for that master-note, which will awaken a vibration from the surrounding community, and which, if it do not find, it is itself too often struck dumb.

For this reason, from the moment in the destiny of nations, that they descend from their culminating point and begin to decline, from that moment the voice of creative genius is hushed, and at best, the age of criticism, learning, and imitation, succeeds. When Greece ceased to be independent, the forum and the stage became mute. The patronage of Macedonian, Alexandrian, and Pergamean princes was lavished in vain. They could not woo the healthy Muses of Hellas, from the cold mountain tops of Greece, to dwell in their gilded halls. Nay, though the fall of greatness, the decay of beauty, the waste of strength, and the wreck of power, have ever been among the favorite themes of the pensive muse, yet not a poet arose in Greece to chant her own elegy; and it is after near three centuries, and from Cicero and Sulpicius, that we catch the first notes of pious and pathetic lamentation over the fallen land of the arts. The freedom and



genius of a country are invariably gathered into a common tomb, and there

Can only strangers breathe

The name of that which was beneath.

It is when we reflect on this power of an auspicious future, that we realize the prospect, which smiles upon the intellect of America. It may justly be accounted the great peculiarity of ancient days, compared with modern, that in antiquity there was, upon the whole, but one civilized and literary nation at a time in the world. Art and refinement followed in the train of political ascendancy, from the East to Greece and from Greece to Rome. In the modern world, under the influence of various causes, intellectual, political, and moral, civilization has been diffused throughout the greater part of Europe and America. Now mark a singular fatality as regards the connexion of this enlarged and diffused civilization, with the progress of letters and the excitement to intellectual exertion in any given state. Instead of one sole country, as in antiquity, where the arts and refinements find a home, there are, in modern Europe, seven or eight equally entitled to the general name of cultivated nations, and

in each of which some minds of the first order have appeared. And yet, by the unfortunate multiplication of languages, an obstacle all but insuperable has been thrown in the way of the free progress of genius, in its triumphant course, from region to region. The muses of Shakspeare and Milton, of Camoens, of Lope de Vega, and Calderon, of Corneille and Racine, of Dante and Tasso, of Gœthe and Schiller, are strangers to each other.

This evil was so keenly felt in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that the Latin language was widely adopted as a dialect common to scholars. We see men like Luther, Calvin, and Erasmus, Bacon, Grotius, and Thuanus, who could scarce have written a line without exciting the admiration of their contemporaries, driven to the use of a tongue, which none but the learned could understand. For the sake of addressing the scholars of other countries, these great men, and others like them, in many of their writings, were obliged to cut themselves off, from all sympathy with the mass of those, whom as patriots they must have wished most to instruct. In works of pure science and learned criticism, this is of less consequence ; for

being independent of sentiment, it matters less how remote from real life the symbols, in which their ideas are conveyed. But when we see a writer like Milton, who, more than any other, whom England ever produced, was a master of the music of his native tongue, who, besides all the eloquence of thought and imagery, knew better than any other man how to clothe them, according to his own beautiful expression,

In notes, with many a winding bout  
Of linked sweetness, long drawn out,  
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,  
The melting voice through mazes running,  
Untwisting all the chains that tie  
The hidden soul of harmony ;

when we see a master of English eloquence thus gifted, choosing a dead language, the dialect of the closet, a tongue without an echo from the hearts of the people, as the vehicle of his defence of that people's rights ; asserting the cause of Englishmen in the language, as it may be truly called, of Cicero ; we can only measure the incongruity, by reflecting what Cicero would himself have thought and felt, if called to defend the cause of Roman freedom, not in the language of the Roman citizen, but in that of the Chal-

deans or Assyrians, or some people still farther remote in the history of the world. There is little doubt that the prevalence of the Latin language among modern scholars, was a great cause not only of the slow progress of letters among the lower ranks, but of the stiffness and constraint formerly visible in the vernacular style of most scholars themselves. That the reformation in religion advanced with such rapidity, is doubtless in no small degree to be attributed to the translations of the Scriptures, and the use of liturgies in the modern tongues. While the preservation in England of a strange language—I will not sin against the majesty of Rome by calling it Latin—in legal acts, down to so late a period as 1730, may be one cause, that the practical forms of administering justice have not been made to keep pace with the popular views, that have triumphed in other things. With the erection of popular institutions under Cromwell, among various other legal improvements,\* very many of which were speedily adopted by our plain dealing forefathers, the records of the law were ordered to be kept in English; ‘A novel-

\* See a number of them in Lord Somers’ Tracts, vol. i.

ty,' says the learned commentator on the English laws, 'which at the restoration was no longer continued, practisers having found it very difficult to express themselves so *concisely* or significantly in any other language but Latin ;'\* an argument for the use of that language, whose soundness it must be left to clients to estimate.

Nor are the other remedies more efficacious, which have been attempted for the evil of a multiplicity of tongues. Something is done by translations and something by the acquisition of foreign languages. But that no effectual transfusion of the higher literature of a country can take place, in the way of translation, is matter of notoriety ; and it is a remark of one of the few, who could have courage to make such a remark, Madame de Staël, that it is impossible fully to comprehend the literature of a foreign tongue. The general preference given to Young's Night Thoughts and Ossian, over all the other English poets, in many parts of the continent of Europe, seems to confirm the justice of the observation. There is, indeed, an influence of exalted genius coextensive with the earth.

\* Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. iii. 422.

Something of its power will be felt, in spite of the obstacles of different languages, remote regions, and other times. But its true empire, its lawful sway, are at home and over the hearts of kindred men. A charm, which nothing can borrow, nothing counterfeit, nothing dispense with, resides in the simple sound of our mother tongue. Not analyzed, nor reasoned upon, it unites the earliest associations of life with the maturest conceptions of the understanding. The heart is willing to open all its avenues to the language, in which its infantile caprices were soothed; and by the curious efficacy of the principal association, it is this echo from the feeble dawn of life, which gives to eloquence much of its manly power, and to poetry much of its divine charm. This feeling of the music of our native language is the first intellectual capacity that is developed in children, and when by age or misfortune,

‘The ear is all unstrung,  
Still, still, it loves the lowland tongue.’

What a noble prospect is opened in this connexion for the circulation of thought and sentiment in our country! Instead of that multiplicity of dialect, by which mental communication and



sympathy are cut off in the old world, a continually expanding realm is opened and opening to American intellect, in the community of our language, throughout the wide spread settlements of this continent. The enginery of the press will here, for the first time, be brought to bear, with all its mighty power, on the minds and hearts of men, in exchanging intelligence, and circulating opinions, unchecked by the diversity of language, over an empire more extensive than the whole of Europe.

And this community of language, all important as it is, is but a part of the manifold brotherhood, which unites and will unite the growing millions of America. In Europe, the work of international alienation, which begins in diversity of language, is carried on and consummated by diversity of government, institutions, national descent, and national prejudices. In crossing the principal rivers, channels, and mountains, in that quarter of the world, you are met, not only by new tongues, but by new forms of government, new associations of ancestry, new and generally hostile objects of national boast and gratulation. While on the other hand, throughout the vast regions included within the

limits of our Republic, not only the same language, but the same laws, the same national government, the same republican institutions, and a common ancestral association prevail, and will diffuse themselves. Mankind will here exist, move, and act in a kindred mass, such as was never before congregated on the earth's surface. The necessary consequences of such a cause overpower the imagination. What would be the effect on the intellectual state of Europe, at the present day, were all her nations and tribes amalgamated into one vast empire, speaking the same tongue, united into one political system, and that a free one, and opening one broad unobstructed pathway for the interchange of thought and feeling, from Lisbon to Archangel. If effects are to bear a constant proportion to their causes; if the energy of thought is to be commensurate with the masses which prompt it, and the masses it must penetrate; if eloquence is to grow in fervor with the weight of the interests it is to plead, and the grandeur of the assemblies it addresses; if efforts rise with the glory that is to crown them; in a word, if the faculties of the human mind, as we firmly believe, are capable of tension and achievement altogether indefinite;

Nil actum reputans, dum quid superesset agendum,  
then it is not too much to say, that a new era will open on the intellectual world, in the fulfilment of our country's prospects. By the sovereign efficacy of the partition of powers between the national and state governments, in virtue of which the national government is relieved from all the odium of internal administration, and the state governments are spared the conflicts of foreign politics, all bounds seem removed from the possible extension of our country, but the geographical limits of the continent. Instead of growing cumbrous, as it increases in size, there never was a moment since the first settlement in Virginia, when the political system of America moved with so firm and bold a step as at the present day. If there is any faith in our country's auspices, this great continent, in no remote futurity, will be filled up with a homogeneous population; with the mightiest kindred people known in history; our language will acquire an extension, which no other ever possessed; and the empire of the mind, with nothing to resist its sway, will attain an expansion, of which as yet we can but partly conceive. The vision is too magnificent to be



fully borne ;—a mass of two or three hundred millions, not chained to the oar like the same number in China, by a brutalizing despotism, but held in their several orbits of nation and state, by the grand representative attraction ; bringing to bear on every point the concentrated energy of such a host ; calling into competition so many minds ; uniting into one great national feeling the hearts of so many freemen ; all to be guided, persuaded, moved, and swayed, by the master spirits of the time !

Let me not be told that this is a chimerical imagination of a future indefinitely removed ; let me not hear repeated the ribaldry of an anticipation of ‘two thousand years,’—of a vision that requires for its fulfilment a length of ages beyond the grasp of any reasonable computation. It is the last point of peculiarity in our condition, to which I invite your attention, as affecting the progress of intellect in the country, that it is growing with a rapidity hitherto entirely without example in the world. For the two hundred years of our existence, the population has doubled itself, in periods of less than a quarter of a century. In the infancy of the country, and while our numbers remained within

the limits of a youthful colony, a progress so rapid as this, however important in the principle of growth disclosed, was not yet a circumstance strongly to fix the attention. But arrived at a population of ten millions, it is a fact of the most overpowering interest, that, within less than twenty five years, these ten millions will have swelled to twenty ; that the younger members of this audience will be citizens of the largest civilized state on earth ; that in a few years more than one century, the American population will equal the fabulous numbers of the Chinese empire. This rate of increase has already produced the most striking phenomena. A few weeks after the opening of the Revolutionary drama at Lexington, the momentous intelligence, that the first blood was spilt, reached a party of hunters beyond the Alleghanies, who had wandered far into the western wilderness. In prophetic commemoration of the glorious event, they gave the name of Lexington to the spot of their encampment in the woods. That spot is now the capital of a state larger than Massachusetts ; it is the seat of an university as fully attended as our venerable Alma Mater ; nay more it is the capital of a state

from which, in the language of one of her own citizens, whose eloquence is the ornament of his country, the tide of emigration still farther westward is more fully pouring than from any other in the union.\*

I need not say that this astonishing increase of numbers, is by no means the limit and measure of our country's growth. Arts, agriculture, all the great national interests, all the sources of national wealth, are growing in a ratio still more rapid. In our cities the intensest activity is apparent; in the country every spring of prosperity, from the smallest improvement in husbandry to the construction of canals across the continent is in vigorous action; abroad our vessels are beating the pathways of the ocean white; on the inland frontier, the nation is journeying on, like a healthy giant, with a pace more like romance than reality.

These facts, and thousands like them, form one of those peculiarities in our country's condition, which will have the most powerful influence on the minds of its children. The population of several states of Europe has reached its term. In some it is declining, in some sta-

\* Mr Clay's late Speech on Internal Improvements.

tionary, and in the most prosperous, under the extraordinary *stimulus* of the last part of the eighteenth century, it doubles itself but about once in seventy five years. In consequence of this, the process of social transmission is heavy and slow. Men, not adventitiously favored, come late into life, and the best years of existence are exhausted in languishing competition. The man grows up, and in the stern language of one of their most renowned economists,\* finds no cover laid for him at Nature's table. The smallest official provision is a boon, at which great minds are not ashamed to grasp; the assurance of the most frugal subsistence commands the brightest talents and the most laborious studies; poor wages pay for the unremitting labor of the most curious hands; and it is the smallest part of the population only that is within the reach even of these humiliating springs of action. We need not labor to contrast this state of things with the teeming growth and noble expansion of all our institutions and resources. Instead of being shut up, as it were, in the prison of a stationary, or a very slowly

\* Mr Malthus.

progressive community, the emulation of our countrymen is drawn out and tempted on, by a horizon constantly receding before them. New nations of kindred freemen are springing up in successive periods, shorter even than the active portion of the life of man. ‘While we spend our time,’ says Burke on this topic, ‘in deliberating on the mode of governing two millions in America, we shall find we have millions more to manage.\*’ Many individuals are in this house, who were arrived at years of discretion when these words of Burke were uttered, and the two millions, which Great Britain was then to manage, have grown into ten, exceedingly unmanageable. The most affecting view of this subject is, that it puts it in the power of the wise, and good, and great to gather, while they live, the ripest fruits of their labors. Where, in human history is to be found a contrast like that, which the last fifty years have crowded into the lives of those favored men, who raising their hands or their voices, when our little bands were led out to the perilous conflict with one of the most powerful empires on earth, have lived to

\* Speech on Conciliation with America, March 22, 1775.



be crowned with the highest honors of the Republic, which they established? Honor to their grey hairs, and peace and serenity to the evening of their eventful days!

Though it may never again be the fortune of our country to bring within the compass of half a century a contrast so dazzling as this, yet in its grand and steady progress, the career of duty and usefulness will be run by all its children, under a constantly increasing *stimulus*. The voice, which, in the morning of life, shall awaken the patriotic sympathy of the land, will be echoed back by a community, incalculably swelled in all its proportions, before it shall be hushed in death. The writer, by whom the noble features of our scenery shall be sketched with a glowing pencil, the traits of our romantic early history gathered up with filial zeal, and the peculiarities of our character seized with delicate perception, cannot mount so entirely and rapidly to success, but that ten years will add new millions to the numbers of his readers. The American statesman, the orator, whose voice is already heard in its supremacy, from Florida to Maine, whose intellectual empire already extends beyond the limits of Alex-

ander's, has yet new states and new nations starting into being, the willing tributaries to his sway.

This march of our population westward has been attended with consequences in some degree novel, in the history of the human mind. It is a fact, somewhat difficult of explanation, that the refinement of the ancient nations seemed almost wholly devoid of an elastic and expansive principle. The arts of Greece were enchained to her islands and her coasts; they did not penetrate the interior. The language and literature of Athens were as unknown, to the north of Pindus, at a distance of two hundred miles from the capital of Grecian refinement, as they were in Scythia. Thrace, whose mountain tops may almost be seen from the porch of the temple of Minerva at Sunium, was the proverbial abode of barbarism. Though the colonies of Greece were scattered on the coasts of Italy, of France, of Spain, and of Africa, no extension of their population toward the interior took place, and the arts did not penetrate beyond the walls of the cities, where they were cultivated. How different is the picture of the diffusion of the arts and improve-

ments of civilization, from the coast to the interior of America! Population advances westward with a rapidity, which numbers may describe indeed but cannot represent, with any vivacity, to the mind. The wilderness, which one year is impassable, is traversed the next by the caravans of the industrious emigrants, who go to follow the setting sun, with the language, the institutions, and the arts of civilized life. It is not the irruption of wild barbarians, come to visit the wrath of God on a degenerate empire; it is not the inroad of disciplined banditti, marshalled by the intrigues of ministers and kings. It is the human family led out to possess its broad patrimony. The states and nations, which are springing up in the valley of the Missouri, are bound to us, by the dearest ties of a common language, a common government, and a common descent. Before New-England can look with coldness on their rising myriads, she must forget that some of the best of her own blood is beating in their veins; that her hardy children, with their axes on their shoulders, have been literally among the pioneers in this march of humanity; that young as she is, she has become the mother of populous states.

What generous mind would sacrifice to a selfish preservation of local preponderance, the delight of beholding civilized nations rising up in the desert ; and the language, the manners, the institutions, to which he has been reared, carried with his household gods to the foot of the Rocky Mountains ? Who can forget that this extension of our territorial limits is the extension of the empire of all we hold dear ; of our laws, of our character, of the memory of our ancestors, of the great achievements in our history ? Whithersoever the sons of the thirteen states shall wander, to southern or western climes, they will send back their hearts to the rocky shores, the battle fields, and the intrepid councils of the Atlantic coast. These are placed beyond the reach of vicissitude. They have become already matter of history, of poetry, of eloquence :

The love, where death has set his seal,  
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,  
Nor falsehood disavow.

Divisions may spring up, ill blood arise, parties be formed, and interests may seem to clash ; but the great bonds of the nation are linked to what is passed. The deeds of the great men, to

whom this country owes its origin and growth, are a patrimony, I know, of which its children will never deprive themselves. As long as the Mississippi and the Missouri shall flow, those men and those deeds will be remembered on their banks. The sceptre of government may go where it will ; but that of patriotic feeling can never depart from Judah. In all that mighty region, which is drained by the Missouri and its tributary streams—the valley coextensive with the temperate zone—will there be, as long as the name of America shall last, a father, that will not take his children on his knee and recount to them the events of the twentieth of December, the nineteenth of April, the seventeenth of June, and the fourth of July ?

This then is the theatre, on which the intellect of America is to appear, and such the motives to its exertion ; such the mass to be influenced by its energies, such the crowd to witness its efforts, such the glory to crown its success. If I err, in this happy vision of my country's fortunes, I thank God for an error so animating. If this be false, may I never know the truth. Never may you, my friends, be under

any other feeling, than that a great, a growing, an immeasurably expanding country is calling upon you for your best services. The name and character of our Alma Mater have already been carried by some of our brethren thousands of miles from her venerable walls; and thousands of miles still farther westward, the communities of kindred men are fast gathering, whose minds and hearts will act in sympathy with yours.

The most powerful motives call on us as scholars for those efforts, which our common country demands of all her children. Most of us are of that class, who owe whatever of knowledge has shone into our minds, to the free and popular institutions of our native land. There are few of us, who may not be permitted to boast, that we have been reared in an honest poverty or a frugal competence, and owe every thing to those means of education, which are equally open to all. We are summoned to new energy and zeal by the high nature of the experiment we are appointed in Providence to make, and the grandeur of the theatre on which it is to be performed. When the old world afforded no longer any hope, it pleased Heaven to open this last refuge of humanity. The at-

tempt has begun, and is going on, far from foreign corruption, on the broadest scale, and under the most benignant auspices; and it certainly rests with us to solve the great problem in human society, to settle, and that forever, the momentous question—whether mankind can be trusted with a purely popular system? One might almost think, without extravagance, that the departed wise and good of all places and times, are looking down from their happy seats to witness what shall now be done by us; that they who lavished their treasures and their blood of old, who labored and suffered, who spake and wrote, who fought and perished, in the one great cause of Freedom and Truth, are now hanging from their orbs on high, over the last solemn experiment of humanity. As I have wandered over the spots, once the scene of their labors, and mused among the prostrate columns of their Senate Houses and Forums, I have seemed almost to hear a voice from the tombs of departed ages; from the sepulchres of the nations, which died before the sight. They exhort us, they adjure us to be faithful to our trust. They implore us, by the long trials of struggling humanity, by the blessed memory of

the departed ; by the dear faith, which has been plighted by pure hands, to the holy cause of truth and man ; by the awful secrets of the prison houses, where the sons of freedom have been immured ; by the noble heads which have been brought to the block ; by the wrecks of time, by the eloquent ruins of nations, they conjure us not to quench the light which is rising on the world. Greece cries to us, by the convulsed lips of her poisoned, dying Demosthenes ; and Rome pleads with us in the mute persuasion of her mangled Tully. They address us each and all in the glorious language of Milton, to one, who might have canonized his memory in the hearts of the friends of liberty, but who did most shamefully betray the cause, ‘ Reverere tantam de te expectationem, spem patriæ de te unicum. Reverere vultus et vulnera tot fortium virorum, quotquot pro libertate tam strenue decertârunt, manes etiam eorum qui in ipso certamine occubuerunt. Reverere exterarum quoque civitatum existimationem de te atque sermones ; quantas res de libertate nostra tam fortiter partâ, de nostra republica tam gloriose exorta sibi polliceantur ; quæ si tam cito quasi



aborta evanuerit, profecto nihil æque dedecorosum huic genti atque periculosum fuerit.\*<sup>7</sup>

Yes, my friends, such is the exhortation which calls on us to exert our powers, to employ our time, and consecrate our labors in the cause of our native land. When we engage in that solemn study, the history of our race, when we survey the progress of man, from his cradle in the East to these last limits of his wandering ; when we behold him forever flying westward from civil and religious thralldom, bearing his household gods over mountains and seas, seeking rest and finding none, but still pursuing the flying bow of promise, to the glittering hills which it spans in Hesperian climes, we cannot but exclaim with Bishop Berkeley, the generous prelate of England, who bestowed his benefactions, as well as blessings, on our country.

Westward the Star of Empire takes its way ;

The four first acts already past,

The fifth shall close the drama with the day ;

Time's noblest offspring is the last.

In that high romance, if romance it be, in which the great minds of antiquity sketched the fortunes of the ages to come, they pictured to

\* Milton's *Defensio Secunda*.

themselves a favored region beyond the ocean, a land of equal laws and happy men. The primitive poets beheld it in the islands of the blest ; the Doric bards surveyed it in the Hyperborean regions ; the sage of the academy placed it in the lost Atlantis ; and even the sterner spirit of Seneca could discern a fairer abode of humanity, in distant regions then unknown. We look back upon these uninspired predictions, and almost recoil from the obligation they imply. By us must these fair visions be realized, by us must be fulfilled these high promises, which burst in trying hours from the longing hearts of the champions of truth. There are no more continents or worlds to be revealed ; Atlantis hath arisen from the ocean, the farthest Thule is reached, there are no more retreats beyond the sea, no more discoveries, no more hopes. Here then a mighty work is to be fulfilled, or never, by the race of mortals. The *man*, who looks with tenderness on the sufferings of good men in other times ; the *descendant* of the pilgrims, who cherishes the memory of his fathers ; the *patriot*, who feels an honest glow at the majesty of the system of which he is a member ; the *scholar*, who beholds with rapture the long

sealed book of unprejudiced truth expanded to all to read; these are they, by whom these auspices are to be accomplished. Yes, brethren, it is by the intellect of the country, that the mighty mass is to be inspired; that its parts are to communicate and sympathise, its bright progress to be adorned with becoming refinements, its strong sense uttered, its character reflected, its feelings interpreted to its own children, to other regions, and to after ages.

Meantime the years are rapidly passing away and gathering importance in their course. With the present year will be completed the half century from that most important era in human history, the commencement of our revolutionary war. The jubilee of our national existence is at hand. The space of time, that has elapsed from that momentous date, has laid down in the dust, which the blood of many of them had already hallowed, most of the great men to whom, under Providence, we owe our national existence and privileges. A few still survive among us, to reap the rich fruits of their labors and sufferings; and One has yielded himself to the united voice of a people, and returned in his age, to receive the gratitude of the nation, to

whom he devoted his youth. It is recorded on the pages of American history, that when this friend of our country applied to our commissioners at Paris, in 1776, for a passage in the first ship they should despatch to America, they were obliged to answer him, (so low and abject was then our dear native land,) that they possessed not the means nor the credit sufficient for providing a single vessel, in all the ports of France. Then, exclaimed the youthful hero, 'I will provide my own;' and it is a literal fact, that when all America was too poor to offer him so much as a passage to her shores, he left, in his tender youth, the bosom of home, of happiness, of wealth, of rank, to plunge in the dust and blood of our inauspicious struggle.

Welcome, friend of our fathers, to our shores! Happy are our eyes that behold those venerable features. Enjoy a triumph, such as never conqueror or monarch enjoyed, the assurance that throughout America, there is not a bosom, which does not beat with joy and gratitude at the sound of your name. You have already met and saluted, or will soon meet, the few that remain of the ardent patriots, prudent counsellors, and brave warriors with whom you were associ-

ated in achieving our liberty. But you have looked round in vain for the faces of many, who would have lived years of pleasure on a day like this, with their old companion in arms and brother in peril. Lincoln, and Greene, and Knox, and Hamilton, are gone; the heroes of Saratoga and Yorktown have fallen, before the only foe they could not meet. Above all, the first of heroes and of men, the friend of your youth, the more than friend of his country, rests in the bosom of the soil he redeemed. On the banks of his Potomac, he lies in glory and peace. You will revisit the hospitable shades of Mount Vernon, but him whom you venerated as we did, you will not meet at its door. His voice of consolation, which reached you in the Austrian dungeons, cannot now break its silence, to bid you welcome to his own roof. But the grateful children of America will bid you welcome, in his name. Welcome, thrice welcome to our shores; and whithersoever throughout the limits of the continent your course shall take you, the ear that hears you shall bless you, the eye that sees you shall bear witness to you, and every tongue exclaim, with heartfelt joy, welcome, welcome La Fayette!



AN

# ORATION

DELIVERED AT PLYMOUTH

DECEMBER 22, 1824.

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By EDWARD EVERETT.

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**Boston.**

CUMMINGS, HILLIARD & CO. 134 WASHINGTON STREET.

1825.

## District of Massachusetts: to wit.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the thirteenth day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five, and in the forty-ninth year of the Independence of the United States of America, CUMMINGS, HILLIARD & Co. of the said District, have deposited in this office, the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

“An Oration delivered at Plymouth December 22, 1824. By EDWARD EVERETT.”

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;” and also to an act, entitled “An act, supplementary to an act, entitled an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.”

JNO. W. DAVIS,

Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

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I. R. BUTTS, Printer.  
Press of the North American Review.

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*Plymouth, December 23, 1824.*

PROFESSOR EDWARD EVERETT,

SIR,—In obedience to a vote of the Trustees of the PILGRIM SOCIETY, I have the honor to make the subjoined communication.

“At a meeting of the Trustees of the PILGRIM SOCIETY, holden in Plymouth, Dec. 22, 1824,

“*Voted*, That the thanks of the Society be presented to Professor EDWARD EVERETT, for his interesting and eloquent Discourse delivered this day; and that a copy be requested for publication.”

I am, with due sentiments of respect and regard, sir,

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL DAVIS,

*Corresponding Secretary.*

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A few passages in the following Discourse were, on account of its length, omitted in the delivery.

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## Oration.

THERE are occasions on which the employment, best calculated to be pleasing, becomes a source of anxiety; and the most flattering trust grows into a burthen. Amidst all the proud and grateful feelings, which the return of this anniversary must inspire, in the bosom of every child of New England, a deep solicitude oppresses me, lest I should fail in doing justice to the men, to the day, and to the events, which we are met to commemorate. In this solicitude, no personal sentiment mingles. I should be unworthy to address you, on this occasion, could I, from the selfish desire of winning your applause, devote one of the moments of this consecrated day to any cold speculations, however ingenious or original. Gladly would I give utterance to the most familiar commonplaces,

could I be so happy in doing it, as to excite or strengthen the feelings, which belong to the time and the place. Gladly would I repeat to you those sentiments, which a hundred times have been uttered and welcomed on this anniversary; sentiments, whose truth does not change in the change of circumstances, whose power does not wear out with time. It is not by pompous epithets or lively antithesis, that the exploits of the pilgrims are to be set forth by their children. We can only do this worthily, by repeating the plain tale of their sufferings, by dwelling on the circumstances under which their memorable enterprise was executed, and by cherishing and uttering that spirit, which led them across the Ocean, and guided them to the spot where we stand.—We need no voice of artificial rhetoric to celebrate their names. The bleak and deathlike desolation of nature proclaims, with touching eloquence, the fortitude and patience of the meek adventurers. On the bare and wintry fields around us, their exploits are written in characters, which will last, and tell their tale to posterity, when brass and marble have crumbled into dust.

The occasion which has called us together is certainly one, to which no parallel exists in the history of the world. Other countries, and our own also, have their national festivals. They commemorate the birthdays of their illustrious children; they celebrate the foundation of important institutions: momentous events, victories, reformations, revolutions awaken, on their anniversaries, the grateful and patriotic feelings of posterity. But we commemorate the birthday of all New England; the foundation, not of one institution, but of all the institutions, the settlements, the establishments, the communities, the societies, the improvements, comprehended within our broad and happy borders.

Were it only as an act of rare adventure; were it a trait in foreign, or ancient history; we should fix upon the achievement of our fathers, as one of the noblest deeds, in the annals of the world. Were we attracted to it, by no other principle than that sympathy we feel, in all the fortunes of our race, it could lose nothing—it must gain—in the contrast, with whatever history or tradition has preserved to us of the wanderings and settlements of the tribes of

man. A continent for the first time, effectually explored; a vast ocean traversed by men, women, and children, voluntarily exiling themselves from the fairest regions of the old world; and a great nation grown up, in the space of two centuries, on the foundations so perilously laid, by this pious band:—point me to the record, to the tradition, nay to the fiction of any thing, that can enter into competition with it.—It is the language not of exaggeration, but of truth and soberness to say, that there is nothing in the accounts of Phenician, of Grecian, or of Roman Colonization, that can stand in the comparison.

What new importance then does not the achievement acquire to our minds, when we consider that it was the deed of our fathers; that this grand undertaking was accomplished on the spot where we dwell; that the mighty region they explored is our native land; that the unrivalled enterprise they displayed, is not merely a fact proposed to our admiration, but is the source of our being; that their cruel hardships are the spring of our prosperity; their amazing sufferings the seed, from which our happiness has sprung; that their weary banish-

ment gave us a home ; that to their separation from every thing which is dear and pleasant in life, we owe all the comforts, the blessings, the privileges, which make our lot the envy of mankind.

These are the well known titles of our ancestors to our gratitude and veneration.

But there seems to me this peculiarity in the nature of their enterprise, that its grand and beneficent consequences are, with the lapse of time, constantly unfolding themselves, in an extent, and to a magnitude, which, till they are witnessed, are beyond the reach of the most sanguine promise. In the frail condition of human affairs, we have generally nothing left us to commemorate, but heroic acts of valor, which have resulted in no permanent effect ; great characters, that have struggled nobly, but in vain, against the disastrous combinations of the age ; brilliant triumphs of truth and justice, rendered unproductive, by the complication of opposite events, and by the stern resistance of that system of destiny, of which even the independence of our wills seems an obedient member.—At best, it is a great blessing, when we can point to some bright unclouded character ; or some prosperous and well ordered institu-

tion ; fortunate in rise and progress ; grand and glorious at maturity ; majestic, peaceful, and seasonable in decay, and piously lamented when no more ; and it is to the few spectacles of this kind in human history, that our minds so constantly and fondly revert from the chequered scene of intermediate and troubled times and conditions.

But it is the peculiar character of the enterprise of our pilgrim forefathers—successful indeed in its outset—that it has been more and more successful, at every subsequent point in the line of time.—Accomplishing all they projected ; what they projected was the least part of what has been accomplished. Forming a design, in itself grand, bold, and even appalling, for the sacrifices it required, and the risks it involved ; the fulfilment of that design is the least thing, which, in the steady progress of events, has flowed from their counsels and their efforts.—Did they propose to themselves a refuge beyond the sea, from the religious and political tyranny of Europe ? They achieved not that alone, but they have opened a wide asylum to all the victims of tyranny throughout the world. We ourselves have seen the statesmen, the generals,



the kings of the elder world, flying for protection to the shadow of our institutions. Did they wish only to escape to a remote corner, where the arm of oppression could not reach them? They founded a great realm, an imperial patrimony of liberty, the first effectual counterpoise in the scale of human right. Did they look for a retired spot, inoffensive for its obscurity and safe in its remoteness, where the little church of Leyden might enjoy the freedom of conscience? Behold the mighty regions over which in peaceful conquest—*victoria sine clade*—they have borne the banners of the cross.—Did they seek, beneath the protection of trading charters, to prosecute a frugal commerce in reimbursement of the expenses of their humble establishment? The fleets and navies of their descendants are on the farthest ocean; and the wealth of the Indies is now wafted with every tide to the coasts, where with hook and line they painfully gathered up their little adventures.—In short, did they, in their brightest and most sanguine moments, contemplate a thrifty, loyal, and prosperous colony—portioned off, like a younger son of the imperial household, to an humble, a dutiful distance? Behold the

spectacle of an independent and powerful Republic, founded on the shores where some of those are but lately deceased, who saw the first-born of the pilgrims.

And shall we stop here? Is the tale now told; is the contrast now complete; are our destinies all fulfilled; have we reached the meridian; are we declining; are we stationary? My friends, I tell you, we have but begun; we are in the very morning of our days; our numbers are but an unit; our national resources but a pittance; our hopeful achievements in the political, the social, and the intellectual nature, are but the rudiments of what the children of the Pilgrims must yet attain. If there is any thing certain in the principles of human and social progress; if there is any thing clear in the deductions from past history; if there is any, the least, reliance to be placed on the conclusions of reason, in regard to the nature of man, the existing spectacle of our country's growth, magnificent as it is, does not suggest even an idea of what it must be. I dare adventure the prediction, that he who shall stand where I stand, two centuries hence, and look back on our present condition from a distance,

equal to that from which we contemplate the first settlement of the Pilgrims, will sketch a contrast far more astonishing; and will speak of our times as the day of small things, in stronger and juster language, than any in which we can depict the poverty and wants of our fathers.

But we ought to consecrate this day, not to the promise, nor even the present blessings of our condition, except so far as these are connected with the memory of the Pilgrims. The twenty second of December belongs to them; and we ought, in consistency, to direct our thoughts to the circumstances, under which their most astonishing enterprise was achieved. I shall hope to have contributed my mite towards our happy celebration, if I can succeed in pointing out a few of those circumstances of the first emigration to our country, and particularly of the first emigration to New England,\* from which, under a kind Providence, has flowed not only the immediate success of the undertaking, but the astonishing train of consequences auspicious to the cause of liberty, humanity, and truth.

\* See Note A.

I. Our forefathers regarded, with natural terror, the passage of the mighty deep. Navigation, notwithstanding the great advances which it had made in the sixteenth century, was yet, comparatively speaking, in its infancy. The very fact, that voyages of great length and hazard were successfully attempted in small vessels, a fact which, on first view, might seem to show a high degree of perfection in the art, in reality proves that it was as yet but imperfectly understood. That the great Columbus should put to sea, for the discovery of a new passage across the Western Ocean to India, with two out of three vessels *unprovided with decks*, may indeed be considered the effect, not of ignorance of the art of navigation, but of bitter necessity.\* But that Sir Francis Drake, near a hundred years afterwards, the first naval commander who ever sailed round the earth, enjoying the advantage of the royal patronage, and aided by the fruits of no little personal experience, should have embarked on his voyage of circumnavigation, with five vessels, of which the largest was of one hundred, and the smallest of fifteen tons,†

\* See Note B.

† Biographia Brittanica, III. 1732.

must needs be regarded as proof, that the art of navigation, in the generation preceding our ancestors, had not reached that point, where the skilful adaptation of means to ends supersedes the necessity of extraordinary intrepidity, aided by not less extraordinary good fortune. It was therefore the first obstacle, which presented itself to the project of the pilgrims, that it was to be carried into execution, across the ocean, which separates our continent from the rest of the world.\* Notwithstanding, however, this circumstance, and the natural effect it must have had on their minds, there is no doubt that it is one of those features in our natural situation, to which America is indebted, not merely for the immediate success of the enterprise of settlement, but for much of its subsequent growth and prosperity.

I do not now allude to the obvious consideration, that the remoteness of the country, to be settled, led to a more thorough preparation for the enterprise, both as respects the tempers of those who embarked in it, and the provisions made for carrying it on ; though this view will not be lost on those, who reflect on the nature

\* See Note C.

of man, by which difficult enterprises (so they be not desperate) are more likely to succeed, than those which seem much easier. Nor do I allude to the effect of our distance from Europe, in preventing the hasty abandonment of the colony, under the pressure of the first difficulties; although the want of frequent and convenient reconveyance was doubtless a considerable security to the early settlements, and placed our fathers, in some degree, in the situation of the followers of Cortez, after he had intrepidly burned the vessels, which conveyed them to the Mexican coasts.

The view, which I would now take of the remoteness of America from Europe, is connected with the higher principles of national fortune and progress.

The rest of the world, though nominally divided into three continents, in reality consists of but one. Europe, Asia, and Africa are separated by no natural barriers, which it has not been easy in every age for an ambitious invader to pass; and apart from this first consequence of the juxtaposition of their various regions, a communication of principle and feeling, of policy and passion, may be propagated, at all times, even to

their remote and seemingly inaccessible communities. The consequence has been, on the whole, highly unfavorable to social progress. The extent of country inhabited or rather infested by barbarous tribes, has generally far outweighed the civilized portions; and more than once, in the history of the world, refinement, learning, arts, laws, and religion, with the wealth and prosperity they have created, have been utterly swept away, and the hands, as it were, moved back, on the dial plate of time, in consequence of the irruption of savage hordes into civilized regions. Were the early annals of the East as amply preserved as those of the Roman empire, they would probably present us with accounts of revolutions, on the Nile and the Euphrates, as disastrous as those, by which the civilized world was shaken, in the first centuries of the Christian era.—Till an ocean interposes its mighty barrier, no citadel of freedom or truth has been long maintained. The magnificent temples of Egypt were demolished in the sixth century before our Saviour, by the hordes, which Cambyses had collected from the *steppes* of Central Asia. The vineyards of Burgundy were wasted in the third century of our era, by

roving savages from beyond the Caucasus. In the eleventh century, Gengis Khan and his Tartars swept Europe and Asia from the Baltic to the China Sea. And Ionia and Attica, the gardens of Greece, are still, under the eyes of the leading Christian powers of Europe, beset by remorseless barbarians from the Altai Mountains.

Nor is it the barbarians alone, who have been tempted by this facility of communication, to a career of boundless plunder. The Alexanders and the Cæsars, the Charlemagnes and the Napoleons, the founders of great empires and authors of schemes of universal monarchy, have been enabled, by the same circumstance, to turn the annals of mankind into a tale of war and misery. When we descend to the scrutiny of single events, we find that the nations, who have most frequently and most immediately suffered, have been those most easily approached and overrun;—and that those who have longest or most uniformly maintained their independence, have done it by virtue of lofty mountains, wide rivers, or the surrounding sea.

In this state of things, the three united continents of the old world do not contain a single spot, where any grand scheme of human im-



provement could be attempted, with a prospect of fair experiment and full success, because there is no spot safe from foreign interference; and no member of the general system so insignificant, that his motions are not watched with jealousy by all the rest. The welfare and progress of man in the most favored region, instead of proceeding in a free and natural course, dependent on the organization and condition of that region alone, can only reach the point, which may be practicable in the general result of an immensely complicated system, made up of a thousand jarring members.

Our country accordingly opened, at the time of its settlement, and still opens, a new theatre of human development.—Notwithstanding the prodigious extent of commercial intercourse, and the wide grasp of naval power among modern states, and their partial effect in bringing us into the political system of Europe, it need not be urged, that we are essentially strangers to it;—placed at a distance, which retards, and for every injurious purpose, neutralizes all peaceful communication, and defies all hostile approach. To this it was owing that so little was here felt of the convulsions of

the civil wars, which followed in England so soon after the expulsion of our fathers. To this, in a more general view, we are indebted for many of our peculiarities as a nation, for our steady colonial growth, our establishment of independence, our escape amidst the political storms which, during the last thirty years, have shaken the empires of the earth.—To this we shall still be indebted, and more and more indebted, with the progress of our country, for the originality and stability of our national character. Hitherto the *political* effects of our seclusion, behind the mighty veil of waters, have been the most important. Now, that our political foundations are firmly laid; that the work of settlement, of colonization, of independence, and of union is all done, and happily done, we shall reap, in other forms, the salutary fruits of our remoteness from the centres of foreign opinion and feeling.

I say not this in direct disparagement of foreign states; their institutions are doubtless as good, in many cases, as the condition of things now admits; or when at the worst, could not be remedied by any one body, nor by any one generation of men; and the evil which requires

for its remedy the accord of successive generations, at the same time that it may generally be called desperate, ought to bring no direct reproach upon the men of any one period.

But without disparaging foreign institutions, we may be allowed to prefer our own ; to assert their excellence, to seek to build them up on their original foundations, on their true principles, and in their unmingled purity. That great word of Independence, which, if first uttered in 1776, was most auspiciously anticipated in 1620, comprehends much more than a mere absence of foreign jurisdiction. I could almost say, that if it rested there, it would scarcely be worth asserting. In every noble, in every true acceptation, it implies not merely an American government, but an American character, an American pride. To the formation of these, nothing will more powerfully contribute than our geographical distance from other parts of the world. The unhealthy air of Europe is purified in crossing the waves of the Atlantic. The roaring of its mighty billows is not terrible,—it does but echo the voices of our national feeling and power.

In these views there is nothing unsocial ; nothing hostile to a friendly and improving con-

nexion of distant regions with each other, or to the profitable interchange of the commodities, which a bountiful Providence has variously scattered over the earth. For these and all other desirable ends, the perfection, to which the art of navigation is brought, affords abundant means of conquering the obstacles of distance. It is idle, in reference to these ends, to speak of our remoteness from the rest of the world, while our commerce is exploring the farthest regions of the earth; while, in exchange for the products or efforts of our industry, the flocks on the western declivity of the Peruvian Andes are supplying us with wool; the north-eastern coasts of Japan furnishing us with oil; and the central provinces of China, with tea. At this moment, the reward of American skill is paid by the Chieftains of inner Tartary, wrapped up in the furs, which, in our voyages of circumnavigation, we have collected on the North Western Coast of our Continent. The interest on American capital is paid by the haughty viziers of Anatolia, whose opium is cultivated and gathered for our merchants. The wages of American labor are paid by the princes of Hindostan, whose plantations of in-

digo depend on us for a portion of their market. While kings and ministers, by intrigue and bloodshed, are contesting the possession of a few square miles of territory, our commerce has silently extended its jurisdiction from island to island, from sea to sea, from continent to continent, till it holds the globe in its grasp.

But while no one can doubt the mutual advantages of a judiciously conducted commerce, or be insensible of the good, which has resulted to the cause of humanity, from the cultivation of a peaceful and friendly intercourse with other climes, it is yet beyond question, that the true principle of American policy, to which the whole spirit of our institutions, not less than the geographical features of the country, invites us, is *separation from Europe*. Next to union at home, which ought to be called not so much the essential condition of our national existence, as our existence itself, separation from all other countries, in policy, spirit, and character, is the great principle, by which we are to prosper. It is toward this that our efforts, public and private, ought to strain ; and we shall rise or decline in strength, improvement, and worth, as we observe or de-

sert this principle. This is the voice of nature, which did not in vain disjoin our continent from the old world ; nor reserve it beyond the ocean for fifty centuries, only that it might become a common receptacle for the exploded principles, the degenerate examples, and the remediless corruptions of other states. This is the voice of our history, which traces every thing excellent in our character and prosperous in our fortunes, to dissent, nonconformity, departure, resistance, and revolution. This is taught us by the marked peculiarity, the wonderful novelty which, whether we will it or not, displays itself in our whole physical, political, and social existence.

And it is a matter of sincere congratulation, that, under the healthy operation of natural causes, very partially accelerated by legislation, the current of our pursuits and industry, without deserting its former channels, is throwing a broad and swelling branch into the interior. Foreign commerce, the natural employment of an enterprising people, whose population is accumulated on the seacoast, and whose neutral services are called for by a world in arms, is daily reverting to a condition of more

equal participation among the various maritime states, and is in consequence becoming less productive to any one. While America remains, and will always remain, among the foremost commercial and naval states, an ample portion of our resources has already taken a new direction. We profited of the dissensions of Europe, which threw her trade into our hands ; and we amassed a capital, as her carriers, before we could otherwise have one of our own. We are now profiting of the pacification of Europe, in the application to our own soil, our own mineral and vegetable products, our water course and water falls, and our general internal resources, of a part of the capital thus accumulated.

This circumstance is, in a general view, most gratifying ; inasmuch as it creates a new bond of mutual dependence, in the variety of our natural gifts, and in the mutual benefits rendered each other by the several sectional interests of the country. The progress is likely to be permanent and sure, because it has been mainly brought about in the natural order of things, and with little legislative interference. Within a few years what a happy change has

taken place ! The substantial clothing of our industrious classes is now the growth of the American soil, and the texture of the American loom ; the music of the water wheel is heard on the banks of our thousand rural streams ; and enterprise and skill, with wealth, refinement, and prosperity in their train, having studded the seashore with populous cities, are making their great “progress” of improvement through the interior, and sowing towns and villages, as it were broadcast, through the country.

II. If our remote position be so important among the circumstances, which favored the enterprise of our fathers, and have favored the growth of their settlements, scarcely less so was the point of time at which those settlements were commenced.

When we cast our eyes over the annals of our race, we find them to be filled with a tale of various fortunes ; the rise and fall of nations ;—periods of light and darkness ;—of great illumination, and of utter obscurity ;—and of all intermediate degrees of intelligence, cultivation, and liberty. But in the seeming confusion of the narrative, our attention is



arrested by three more conspicuous eras at unequal distances in the lapse of ages.

In Egypt we still behold, on the banks of the Nile, the monuments of a polished age;—a period, no doubt, of high cultivation, and of great promise. Beneath the influence of causes, which are lost in the depth of antiquity, but which are doubtless connected with the debasing superstitions and despotism of the age, this period passed away, and left scarce a trace of its existence, beyond the stupendous and mysterious structures,—the temples, the obelisks, and the pyramids,—which yet bear witness to an age of great power and cultivated art, and mock the curiosity of mankind by the records inscrutably carved on their surfaces.

Passing over an interval of one thousand years, we reach the second epoch of light and promise. With the progress of freedom in Greece, the progress of the mind kept pace; and an age both of achievement and of hope succeeded, of which the indirect influence is still felt in the world. But the greater part of mankind were too barbarous to improve by the example of this favored corner; and

though the influence of its arts, letters, and civilization was wonderfully extensive and durable,—though it seemed to revive at the court of the Roman Cæsars, and still later, at that of the Arabian Caliphs, yet not resting on those popular institutions and popular principles, which can alone be permanent because alone natural, it slowly died away, and Europe and the world relapsed into barbarity.

The third great era of our race is the close of the fifteenth century. The use of the mariner's compass and the invention of the art of printing, had furnished the modern world, with two engines of improvement and civilization, either of which was far more efficacious than all united, known to antiquity. The reformation also, about this time, disengaged Christianity, itself one of the most powerful instruments of civilization, from those abuses, which had hitherto nearly destroyed its beneficent influence on temporal affairs; and at this most chosen moment in the annals of the world, America was discovered.

It would not be difficult, by pursuing this analysis, to show that the very period, when the settlement of our coasts began, was peculiarly

auspicious to the foundation of a new and hopeful system.

Religious reformation was the original principle, which enkindled the zeal of our pilgrim fathers ; as it has been so often acknowledged to be the master principle of the greatest movements in the modern world.\* The religions of Greece and Rome were portions of the political systems of these countries. The Scipios, the Crassuses, and Julius Cæsar himself, were high priests. It was, doubtless, owing in part to this example, that at an early period after the first introduction of Christianity, the heads of the church so entirely mistook the spirit of this religion, that, in imitation of the splendid idolatry, which was passing away, they aimed at a new combination of church and state, which received but too much countenance from the policy of Constantine.† This abuse, with ever multiplying and aggravated calamitous consequences, endured, without any effectual check, till the first blow was aimed at the supremacy of the papal power, by Philip the Fair of France, in the fourteenth century,

\* See Note D.

† See Note E.

who laid the foundation of the liberties of the Gallican church, of which the Constitution may be called the Catholic Reformation.\*

After an interval of two hundred years, this example was followed and improved upon by the Princes in Germany, that espoused the protestant reformation of Luther, and in a still more decisive manner by Henry the Eighth in England; at which period we may accordingly date the second great step in the march of religious liberty.†

Much more, however, was yet to be effected toward the dissolution of the unnatural bond between Church and State. Hitherto a domestic was substituted for a foreign yoke, and the rights of private conscience had, perhaps, gained but little in the exchange. In the middle of the sixteenth century, and among the exiles, whom the frantic tyranny of Queen Mary had driven to the free cities on the Rhine, the ever memorable communion of Puritans arose. On their return to England, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, they strenuously opposed themselves to the erection and peculiarities of the English national church.

\* See Note F.

† See Note G.

Nearly as we have now reached, both in simplicity of principle and point of time, to our pilgrim forefathers, there is one more purifying process to go through, one more generation to pass away. The major part of the Puritans themselves, while they rejected some of the forms, and disliked the organization of the English church, adhered in substance to the Constitution of the Genevan church, and their descendants were willing, a century later, to accept of an establishment by law in Scotland.

It remained, therefore, to shake off the last badge of subjection, and in the person of Robert Brown, an individual himself of no very commendable qualities, the last step was taken in the progress of reform, by asserting the independence of each single church. The personal character of Brown was such as to throw no little discouragement on the cause; nor did it acquire firmness till espoused by Robinson, who may be called the father of the *Independent* churches. His own at Leyden was the chief of these, and fidelity to their principles was the motive of their departure from Holland, and the occasion of their settlement at Plymouth.\*

\* See Note H.

But all may not be disposed to join us, in so exact a specification of the beginning of the seventeenth century, as the period, when religious reform had reached its last perfection, and consequently, as the era most favorable to the establishment of a new and free state. None, however, on a larger view of the subject, will be unwilling to allow that this was the great age of general improvement. It was the age, when the discoveries of the Spanish, Portuguese, and English navigators had begun to exert a stimulating influence on the world at large, and the old continent and the new, like the magnetic poles, commenced those momentous processes of attraction and repulsion, from which so much of the activity of both has since proceeded. It was the period when the circulation of knowledge had become general ; and books in all languages were in the hands of a very large class in every country. The history of Europe, in all its states, shows the extent and vehemence of the consequent fermentation. With their new engines of improvement and new principles of right, the communities of men rushed forward in the course of reform ; some with firmness

and vigor, proportioned to the greatness of the object in view, most with tumult and desperation, proportioned to the duration and magnitude of their injuries, and none with entire success. The most that was effected, in the most fortunate states, was a compromise between the new claims and the old abuses. Absolute kings stipulated to be no longer absolute ; and free men preferred what they called petitions of right. In this way, and after infinite struggles, a tolerable foundation for considerable practical liberty was laid on two principles, in the abstract entirely false ; that of acquiescence on the part of the sovereign, and prescription in favor of the people. So firmly established are these principles, by consent of the statesmen of the freest country in Europe, as the best and only foundation of civil rights, that so late as the last years of the eighteenth century, a work of ingenuity seldom, of eloquence never, surpassed, was written by Mr Burke, to prove, that the people of England have not a right to appoint and to remove their rulers ; and that if they ever had the right, they deliberately renounced it at what is called the *glorious* revolution

of 1688, for themselves and their posterity forever.\*

It is obvious, therefore, that the meliorations, which have taken place in Europe within the last two centuries, rest on no sound principle, and are but the effect of alteratives on the fatal malady of age, with which her states are sick at heart. It is true that the popular element, such is its sovereign healing power, which, even on the poor footing of a compromise, has been introduced into a portion of their political constitutions, has operated some of the beneficent effects of the fabled transfusion of youthful blood into aged veins. But the principles of prescription and acquiescence unfortunately run as much in favor of abuses and corruptions as of privileges. On the received footing, the acknowledged vices and evils of their institutions are as sacred as the best rights, and the door to any consistent and rational improvement is effectually closed ; because the more degenerate, the more antiquated, the more hostile to the spirit and character of the age, the institution that needs reform may be, the more ancient it will also

\* See Note I.



commonly be found, and in consequence, the more strongly fortified by prescription.

While, therefore, the work of social renovation is entirely hopeless in Europe, we cannot but regard it as the plain interposition of Providence, that, at the critical point of time, when the most powerful springs of improvement were in operation, a chosen company of pilgrims, who were actuated by these springs of improvement, in all their strength, who had purchased the privilege of dissent at the high price of banishment from the civilized world, and who, with the dust of their feet, had shaken off the antiquated abuses and false principles, which had been accumulating for thousands of years, came over to these distant, unoccupied shores. I know not that the work of thorough reform could be safely trusted to any other hands. I can credit their disinterestedness, when they maintain the equality of ranks; for no rich forfeitures of attainted lords await them in the wilderness. I need not question the sincerity with which they assert the rights of conscience; for the plundered treasures of an ancient hierarchy are not to seal their doctrine. They rested the edifice of their civil and religious liberties on a foundation as pure and

innocent as the snows around them. Blessed be the spot, the only one earth, where such a foundation was ever laid. Blessed be the spot, the only one on earth, where man has attempted to establish the good, without beginning with the sad, the odious, the too suspicious task of pulling down the bad.

III. Under these favorable auspices, the Pilgrims landed on the coast of New England. They found it a region of moderate fertility, offering an unsubdued wilderness to the hand of labor, with a climate temperate indeed, but compared with that which they had left, verging somewhat near to either extreme; and a soil which promised neither gold nor diamonds, nor any thing but what should be gained from it by patient industry. This was but a poor reality for that dream of oriental luxury, with which America had filled the imaginations of men. The visions of Indian wealth, of mines of silver and gold, and fisheries of pearl, with which the Spanish adventurers in Mexico and Peru had astonished the ears of Europe, were but poorly fulfilled on the bleak, rocky, and sterile plains of New England. No doubt, in the beginning

of the settlement, these circumstances operated unfavorably on the growth of the colony. In the nature of things, it is mostly adventurers, who incline to leave their homes and native land, and risk the uncertainty of another hemisphere; and a climate and soil like ours furnished but little attraction to the adventuring class. Captain Smith, in his zeal to promote the growth of New England, is at no little pains to show that the want of mineral treasures was amply compensated by the abundant fishery of the coast; and having sketched in strong colors the prosperity and wealth of the states of Holland, he adds, "Divers, I know, may allege many other assistances, but this is the chiefest mine, and the sea the source of those silver streams of their virtue, which hath made them now the very miracle of industry, the only pattern of perfection for these affairs; and the benefit of fishing is that *primum mobile* that turns all their spheres to this height of plenty, strength, honor and exceeding great admiration."\*

While we smile at this overwrought panegyric on the primitive resource of our fathers, we

\* Smith's Generall Historie, &c. Vol. II. p. 185. Richmond Edit.

cannot but do justice to the principle, on which it rests. It is doubtless to the untempting qualities of our climate and soil, and the conditions of industry and frugality, on which alone the prosperity of the colony could be secured, that we are to look for a full share of the final success, that crowned the enterprise.

To this it is to be ascribed that the country itself was not preoccupied by a crowded population of savages, like the West India Islands, like Mexico and Peru, who, placed upon a soil yielding almost spontaneously a superabundance of food, had multiplied into populous empires, and made a progress in the arts, which served no other purpose, than to give strength and permanence to some of the most frightful systems of despotism, that ever afflicted humanity; systems uniting all that is most horrible in depraved civilization and wild barbarity. The problem indeed is hard to be solved, in what way and by what steps a continent, possessed by savage tribes, is to be lawfully occupied and colonized by civilized man.\* But this question was divested of much of its practical difficulty by the scantiness of the native population, which our

\* See Note K.

fathers found in New England, and the migratory life to which the necessity of the chase reduced them. It is owing to this, that the annals of New England exhibit no scenes like those which were acted in Hispaniola, in Mexico, and Peru; no tragedies like those of Anacoana, of Guatimozin, and of Atahualpa; no statesman like Bovadilla; no heroes like Pizarro and Cortes;

“No dark Ovando, no religious Boyle.”

The qualities of our climate and soil enter largely in other ways into that natural basis, on which our prosperity and our freedom have been reared. It is these which distinguish the smiling aspect of our busy, thriving villages from the lucrative desolation of the sugar islands, and all the wide spread, undescribed, indescribable miseries of the colonial system of modern Europe, as it has existed beyond the barrier of these mighty oceans, in the unvisited, unprotected, and unavenged recesses of either India. We have had abundant reason to be contented with this austere sky, this hard unyielding soil. Poor as it is, it has left us no cause to sigh for the luxuries of the tropics, nor to covet the mines of the southern regions of our hemisphere. Our

rough and hardly subdued hill sides and barren plains have produced us that, which neither ores, nor spices, nor sweets could purchase,—which would not spring in the richest gardens of the despotic East. The compact numbers and the strength, the general intelligence and the civilization which, since the world began, were never exhibited beneath the sultry line, have been the precious product of this iron bound coast.\* The rocks and the sands, which would yield us neither the cane nor the coffee tree, have yielded us, not only an abundance and a growth in resources, rarely consistent with the treacherous profusion of the tropical colonies, but the habits, the manners, the institutions, the industrious population, the schools and the churches, beyond all the wealth of all the Indies.

“Man is the nobler growth our soil supplies,  
And souls are ripened in our northern skies.”

Describe to me a country, rich in veins of the precious metals, that is traversed by good roads. Inform me of the convenience of bridges, where the rivers roll over golden sands. Tell me of a thrifty, prosperous village of freemen, in the

\* See Note L.

miserable districts where every clod of the earth is kneaded up for diamonds, beneath the lash of the task master. No, never! while the constitution, not of states, but of human nature, remains the same; never, while the laws, not of civil society, but of God are unrepealed, will there be a hardy, virtuous, independent yeomanry in regions where two acres of untilled banana will feed a hundred men.\* It is idle to call that *food*, which can never feed a free, intelligent, industrious population. It is not food. It is dust; it is chaff; it is ashes;—there is no nourishment in it, if it be not carefully sown, and painfully reaped, by laborious freemen, on their own fee-simple acres.

IV. Nor ought we omit to say, that if our fathers found, in the nature of the region to which they emigrated, the most favorable spot for the growth of a free and happy state, they themselves sprang from the land, the best adapted to furnish the habits and principles essential to the great undertaking. In an age that speculates, and speculates to important purpose, on the races of fossil animals, of which

\* See Note M.

no living specimen has existed since the deluge, and which compares, with curious criticism, the dialects of languages which ceased to be spoken a thousand years ago, it cannot be called idle to inquire which of the different countries of modern Europe possesses the qualities, that best adapt it to become the parent nation of a new and free state. I know not in fact, what more momentous question in human affairs could be asked, than that which regards the most hopeful lineage of a collective empire. But without engaging in so extensive a discussion, I may presume that there is not one who hears me, that does not feel it a matter of congratulation and joy, that our fathers were Englishmen.

No character is perfect among nations, more than among men, nor is the office of the panegyrist more respectable towards the one than the other. But it must needs be conceded, that after our own country, England is the most favored abode of liberty; or rather, that besides our own, it is the only land where liberty can be said to exist; the only land where the voice of the sovereign is not stronger than the voice of the law. We can scarce revolve with patience the idea, that we might have been a Spa-



nish colony, a Portuguese colony, or a Dutch colony ; we can scarcely compare with coolness the inheritance of those institutions, which were transmitted to us by our fathers, with that which we must have received from almost any other country ; absolute government, military despotism, privileged orders, and the holy inquisition.\* What would have been the condition of this flourishing and happy land, were these the institutions, on which its settlement had been founded ? There are, unfortunately, too many materials for answering this question, in the history of the Spanish and Portuguese settlements on the American continent, from the first moment of unrelenting waste and desolation, to the distractions and conflicts, of which we ourselves are the witnesses. What hope can there be for the colonies of nations, which possess themselves no spring of improvement ; and tolerate none in the regions over which they rule ; whose administration sets no bright examples of political independence ; whose languages send out no reviving lessons of sound and practical science, afraid of nothing that is true of manly literature, of free speculation ; but

\* See Note N.

repeat, with every ship that crosses the Atlantic, the same debasing voice of despotism, credulity, superstition, and slavery.

Let us here bring our general conceptions down to an example. The country called Brazil, and till lately subject to the kingdom of Portugal, (a kingdom more nearly of the size of Tennessee than of any other of the United States ;)—the country of Brazil, stretching from the mouth of the Oyapoco, in the fourth degree of north latitude, to the Banda Oriental in the thirty third degree of south, and from Peru to the Atlantic Ocean,\* is, by computation, one tenth part more extensive than the entire territory of the United States. Our whole vast possessions, from the most southern point of Florida to the northeastern extremity of Maine, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean,—possessions which the Surveyor's chain has never marked out, over which tribes of Indians yet roam undisturbed, whose numbers, whose race, whose very names are unknown,—tracts unexplored, in which the wild hunter, half savage, half outlaw, has not yet startled the beaver, on the still and solitary banks of his

\* See Note O.

hereditary stream,—I say this mighty territory is one tenth smaller than Brazil. And now name to me a book in the Portuguese language, where a Brazilian could read so much as the elements of liberty. Name to me a law in the Portuguese code, to protect his property from confiscation and himself from the rack or the stake, whenever the minister shall give the nod. Name me an institution in the whole Portuguese system, in the remotest degree favorable to the progress and happiness of man.—And yet it is from this despised corner of Europe, that all the seed must come, to sow this mighty land. It is from this debased source that all the influences have gone forth, which have for three centuries actually decided, and for centuries more must decisively influence the destinies of these all but boundless territories.\*

What citizen of our republic is not grateful in the contrast which our history presents? —Who does not feel, what reflecting American does not acknowledge, the incalculable advantages derived to this land, out of the

\* See Note P.



deep fountains of civil, intellectual, and moral truth, from which we have drawn in England?—What American does not feel proud that he is descended from the countrymen of Bacon, of Newton, and of Locke?—Who does not know, that while every pulse of civil liberty in the heart of the British empire beat warm and full in the bosom of our fathers; the sobriety, the firmness, and the dignity with which the cause of free principles struggled into existence here, constantly found encouragement and countenance from the sons of liberty there?—Who does not remember that when the pilgrims went over the sea, the prayers of the faithful British confessors, in all the quarters of their dispersion, went over with them, while their aching eyes were strained, till the star of hope should go up in the western skies?—And who will ever forget that in that eventful struggle, which severed this mighty empire from the British crown, there was not heard, throughout our continent in arms, a voice which spoke louder for the rights of America, than that of Burke or of Chatham, within the walls of the British parliament, and at the foot of the British throne?—No, for myself, I can

truly say, that after my native land, I feel a tenderness and a reverence for that of my fathers. The pride I take in my own country makes me respect that from which we are sprung. In touching the soil of England, I seem to return like a descendant to the old family seat ;—to come back to the abode of an aged, the tomb of a departed parent. I acknowledge this great consanguinity of nations. The sound of my native language beyond the sea, is a music to my ear, beyond the richest strains of Tuscan softness, or Castillian majesty.—I am not yet in a land of strangers, while surrounded by the manners, the habits, the forms, in which I have been brought up. I wander delighted through a thousand scenes, which the historians, the poets have made familiar to us,—of which the names are interwoven with our earliest associations. I tread with reverence the spots, where I can retrace the footsteps of our suffering fathers ; the pleasant land of their birth has a claim on my heart. It seems to me a classic, yea, a holy land, rich in the memories of the great and good ; the martyrs of liberty, the exiled heralds of truth ; and richer as the parent of this land of promise in the west.

I am not,—I need not say I am not,—the panegyrist of England. I am not dazzled by her riches, nor awed by her power. The sceptre, the mitre, and the coronet, stars, garters, and blue ribbons seem to me poor things for great men to contend for. Nor is my admiration awakened by her armies, mustered for the battles of Europe; her navies, overshadowing the ocean; nor her empire grasping the farthest east. It is these, and the price of guilt and blood by which they are maintained, which are the cause why no friend of liberty can salute her with undivided affections. But it is the refuge of free principles, though often persecuted; the school of religious liberty, the more precious for the struggles to which it has been called; the tombs of those who have reflected honor on all who speak the English tongue; it is the birthplace of our fathers, the home of the pilgrims; it is these which I love and venerate in England. I should feel ashamed of an enthusiasm for Italy and Greece, did I not also feel it for a land like this. In an American it would seem to me degenerate and ungrateful, to hang with passion

upon the traces of Homer and Virgil, and follow without emotion the nearer and plainer footsteps of Shakspeare and Milton ; and I should think him cold in his love for his native land, who felt no melting in his heart for that other native land, which holds the ashes of his forefathers.

V. But it was not enough that our fathers were of England : the masters of Ireland, and the lords of Hindostan are of England too. But our fathers were Englishmen, aggrieved, persecuted, and banished. It is a principle, amply borne out by the history of the great and powerful nations of the earth, and by that of none more than the country of which we speak, that the best fruits and choicest action of the commendable qualities of the national character, are to be found on the side of the oppressed few, and not of the triumphant many. As in private character, adversity is often requisite to give a proper direction and temper to strong qualities ; so the noblest traits of national character, even under the freest and most independent of hereditary governments, are com-

monly to be sought in the ranks of a protesting minority, or of a dissenting sect. Never was this truth more clearly illustrated than in the settlement of New England.

Could a common calculation of policy have dictated the terms of that settlement, no doubt our foundations would have been laid beneath the royal smile. Convoys and navies would have been solicited to waft our fathers to the coast; armies, to defend the infant communities; and the flattering patronage of princes and lords, to espouse their interests in the councils of the mother country. Happy, that our fathers enjoyed no such patronage; happy, that they fell into no such protecting hands; happy, that our foundations were silently and deeply cast in quiet insignificance, beneath a charter of banishment, persecution, and contempt; so that when the royal arm was at length outstretched against us, instead of a submissive child, tied down by former graces, it found a youthful giant in the land, born amidst hardships, and nourished on the rocks, indebted for no favors, and owing no duty. From the dark portals of the star chamber, and in the stern text of the acts of uniformity, the pilgrims received a com-



mission, more efficient, than any that ever bore the royal seal. Their banishment to Holland was fortunate; the decline of their little company in the strange land was fortunate; the difficulties which they experienced in getting the royal consent to banish themselves to this wilderness were fortunate; all the tears and heart breakings of that ever memorable parting at Delfthaven, had the happiest influence on the rising destinies of New England. All this purified the ranks of the settlers. These rough touches of fortune brushed off the light, uncertain, selfish spirits. They made it a grave, solemn, self-denying expedition, and required of those who engaged in it, to be so too. They cast a broad shadow of thought and seriousness over the cause, and if this sometimes deepened into melancholy and bitterness, can we find no apology for such a human weakness?

It is sad indeed to reflect on the disasters, which the little band of pilgrims encountered. Sad to see a portion of them, the prey of unrelenting cupidity, treacherously embarked in an unsound, unseaworthy ship, which they are soon obliged to abandon, and crowd themselves into one vessel; one hundred persons, besides the

ship's company, in a vessel of one hundred and sixty tons. One is touched at the story of the long, cold, and weary autumnal passage; of the landing on the inhospitable rocks at this dismal season; where they are deserted before long by the ship, which had brought them, and which seemed their only hold upon the world of fellow men, a prey to the elements and to want, and fearfully ignorant of the numbers, the power, and the temper of the savage tribes, that filled the unexplored continent, upon whose verge they had ventured. But all this wrought together for good. These trials of wandering and exile of the ocean, the winter, the wilderness and the savage foe were the final assurance of success.\* It was these that put far away from our fathers' cause, all patrician softness, all hereditary claims to preeminence. No effeminate nobility crowded into the dark and austere ranks of the pilgrims. No Carr nor Villiers would lead on the ill provided band of despised Puritans. No well endowed clergy were on the alert, to quit their cathedrals, and set up a pompous hierarchy in the frozen wilderness. No craving governors were anxious to be sent over to our

\* See Note Q.

cheerless El Dorados of ice and of snow. No, they could not say they had encouraged, patronised, or helped the pilgrims; their own cares, their own labors, their own councils, their own blood, contrived all, achieved all, bore all, sealed all. They could not afterwards fairly pretend to reap where they had not strewn; and as our fathers reared this broad and solid fabric with pains and watchfulness, unaided, barely tolerated, it did not fall when the favor, which had always been withholden, was changed into wrath; when the arm, which had never supported, was raised to destroy.

Methinks I see it now, that one solitary, adventurous vessel, the *Mayflower* of a forlorn hope, freighted with the prospects of a future state, and bound across the unknown sea. I behold it pursuing, with a thousand misgivings, the uncertain, the tedious voyage. Suns rise and set, and weeks and months pass, and winter surprises them on the deep, but brings them not the sight of the wished for shore. I see them now scantily supplied with provisions, crowded almost to suffocation in their illstored prison, delayed by calms, pursuing a circuitous route;—and now driven in fury before the

raging tempest, on the high and giddy waves. The awful voice of the storm howls through the rigging. The laboring masts seem straining from their base;—the dismal sound of the pumps is heard;—the ship leaps, as it were, madly, from billow to billow;—the ocean breaks, and settles with engulfing floods over the floating deck, and beats with deadening, shivering weight, against the staggered vessel.—I see them, escaped from these perils, pursuing their all but desperate undertaking, and landed at last, after a five months passage, on the ice clad rocks of Plymouth,—weak and weary from the voyage,—poorly armed, scantily provisioned, depending on the charity of their ship-master for a draught of beer on board, drinking nothing but water on shore,—without shelter,—without means,—surrounded by hostile tribes. Shut now the volume of history, and tell me, on any principle of human probability, what shall be the fate of this handful of adventurers.—Tell me, man of military science, in how many months were they all swept off by the thirty savage tribes, enumerated within the early limits of New England? Tell me, politician, how long did this shadow of a colony, on which

your conventions and treaties had not smiled, languish on the distant coast? Student of history, compare for me the baffled projects, the deserted settlements, the abandoned adventures of other times, and find the parallel of this. Was it the winter's storm, beating upon the houseless heads of women and children; was it hard labor and spare meals;—was it disease,—was it the tomahawk,—was it the deep malady of a blighted hope, a ruined enterprise, and a broken heart, aching in its last moments, at the recollection of the loved and left, beyond the sea; was it some, or all of these united, that hurried this forsaken company to their melancholy fate?—And is it possible that neither of these causes, that not all combined, were able to blast this bud of hope?—Is it possible, that from a beginning so feeble, so frail, so worthy, not so much of admiration as of pity, there has gone forth a progress so steady, a growth so wonderful, an expansion so ample, a reality so important, a promise, yet to be fulfilled, so glorious?

Such, in a very inadequate statement, are some of the circumstances under which the set-

tlement of our country began. The historian of Massachusetts, after having given a brief notice of Carver, of Bradford, of Winslow, of Brewster, of Standish, and others, adds, "These were the founders of the colony of Plymouth. The settlement of this colony occasioned the settlement of Massachusetts Bay; which was the source of all the other colonies of New England. Virginia was in a dying state, and seemed to revive and flourish from the example of New England. I am not preserving from oblivion," continues he, "the names of heroes whose chief merit is the overthrow of cities, of provinces, and empires; but the names of the founders of a flourishing town and colony, if not of the whole British empire in America."\* This was the judicious reflection of Hutchinson sixty years ago, when the greatest tribute to be paid to the Fathers of Plymouth was, that they took the lead in colonizing the British possessions in America. What then ought to be our emotions, as we meet on this anniversary, upon the spot, where the first successful foundations of the great American republic were laid?

\* Hutchinson's History of Massachusetts Bay, Vol. II. Appendix. page 463.

Within a short period, an incident has occurred, which of itself connects, in the most gratifying association, the early settlement of New England with the present growth and prosperity of our wide extended republic. Within the past year, the sovereign hand of this great confederacy of nations has been extended for the restoration and security of the harbor, where, on the day we celebrate, the germ of the future growth of America was comprehended within one weather beaten vessel, tossing upon the tide, on board of which, in the words of Hutchinson, the fathers of New England, by a solemn instrument, "formed themselves into a proper democracy." Two centuries only have elapsed, and we behold a great American representation convened, from twenty four independent and flourishing republics, taking under their patronage the local interests of the spot where our fathers landed, and providing in the same act of appropriation, for the removal of obstacles in the Mississippi and the repair of Plymouth beach. I know not in what words a more beautiful commentary could be written, on our early infancy or our happy growth. There were members of the national Congress which made that appropriation, I will

not say from distant states, but from different climates; from regions which the sun in the heavens does not reach in the same hour that he rises on us. Happy community of protection! Glorious expansion of brotherhood! Blessed fulfilment of that first timorous hope, that warmed the bosoms of our fathers!

Nor is it even our mighty territory, to which the influence of the principles and example of the fathers of New England is confined. While I utter the words, a constitution of republican government, closely imitated from ours, is going into operation in the states of the Mexican confederation, a region more extensive than all our territories east of the Mississippi.\* Farther south, the provinces of central America, the republic of Guatimala, a country equal in magnitude to our Atlantic states, has sent its envoys to solicit an union with us. Will posterity believe that such an offer was made and refused, in the age that saw England and Spain rushing into war, for the possession of a few uninhabited islets on the coast of Patagonia? Pass the isthmus of Darien, and we behold the sister repub-

\* See Note R.



lic of Colombia, a realm two thirds as large as Europe, ratifying her first solemn treaty of amity and commerce with the United States; while still onward to the south, in the valleys of the Chilian Andes, and on the banks of the La Plata, in states not less vast than those already named, constitutions of republican government are in prosperous operation, founded on our principles, and modelled on our forms. When our commissioners visited those countries in 1817, they found the books most universally read among the people, were the constitutions of the United States, and of the several states, translated into the language of the country; while the public journals were filled with extracts from the celebrated "Defence" of these constitutions, written by that venerable descendant of the Pilgrims, who still lives to witness the prosperous operation of the governments, which he did so much to establish.\*

I do not fear that we shall be accused of extravagance in the enthusiasm we feel at a train of events of such astonishing magnitude, novelty, and consequence, connected by associations

\* See Note S.

so intimate, with the day we now hail ; with the events we now celebrate ; with the pilgrim fathers of New England. Victims of persecution ! how wide an empire acknowledges the sway of your principles ! Apostles of liberty ! what millions attest the authenticity of your mission ! Meek champions of truth, no stain of private interest or of innocent blood is on the spotless garments of your renown ! The great continents of America have become, at length, the theatre of your achievements ; the Atlantic and the Pacific, the highways of communication, on which your principles, your institutions, your example are borne. From the oldest abodes of civilization, the venerable plains of Greece, to the scarcely explored range of the Cordilleras, the impulse you gave at length is felt. While other regions revere you as the leaders of this great march of humanity, we are met on this joyful day, to offer to your memories our tribute of filial affection. The sons and daughters of the Pilgrims, we have assembled on the spot where you, our suffering fathers, set foot on this happy shore. Happy indeed, it has been for us. O that you could have enjoyed those blessings, which you prepared for your children. Could our com-

fortable homes have shielded you from the wintry air ; could our abundant harvests have supplied you in time of famine ; could the broad shield of our beloved country have sheltered you from the visitations of arbitrary power ! We come in our prosperity to remember your trials ; and here on the spot where New England began to be, we come to learn of our pilgrim fathers a deep and lasting lesson of virtue, enterprise, patience, zeal, and faith !

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## NOTES.

### Note A. Page 13.

THE object of this Discourse is of course more immediately confined to New England, as the part of the country most directly affected by the settlement of Plymouth. Some of the topics, however, apply equally to all parts of America; others to all the English Colonies on this Continent. It was not thought necessary to interrupt the train of remark, in each single case, to modify it in reference to this qualification. New England alone is generally mentioned, and the more or less extensive application of each separate topic of observation is left to be made by the intelligent.

### Note B. Page 14.

It is stated by Peter Martyr, the *first writer* on the discovery of America, that two of the vessels of Columbus were without decks. "Ex regio fisco destinata sunt tria Navigia; unum onerarium cavatum, alia duo levia mercatoria *sine caveis*, quæ ab Hispanis *caravelæ* vocantur." (*De rebus Occæncis*, p. 2.) Peter Martyr,\* who had lived and served long, as soldier and ambassador, in Spain, cannot be supposed to have been ignorant of the sense, in which the word *Caravel* was used by the Spaniards. At the same time, it must be allowed to be a circumstance almost incredible, that an expedition, like that of Columbus, should be fitted out, with two out of three vessels unprovided with decks. In Bossi's *Vita di Cristofero Colombo*, published at Milan in 1818, is an able annotation on the subject of the Caravels. It is there asserted, on the credit of an Italian Marine Dictionary, (published at Milan in 1813, in three vols. 4to. and bearing a high character,) that the word "Caravella is known in the Mediterranean, as indicating the larger Turkish ships of war, with a high poop; but that in Portugal it denotes a vessel of from 120 to 140 tons." Du Cange in his Glossary expresses the opinion, that it is a word of Italian origin, an opinion, which de Bossi condemns, regarding it rather as Turkish or Arabic, and probably introduced into the

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\* He must be carefully distinguished from Peter Martyr, the Reformer, who taught for some time in England, and who flourished near a half century after the historian. The name of Peter Martyr is in either case the Christian name only, and to avoid the confusion, it might be expedient to use their family names. That of the reformer was Vermigli, that of the historian d'Anghiera. An account of the former is given in Tiraboschi, VII. 327; of the latter, in the same author, VIII. 366.

European languages by the Moors. These authors, however, are apparently both in an error. The true origin of the term is, no doubt, given in Ferrarii *origines linguæ Italicæ*, as follows; “*Caravela* navigii minoris genus: *Carabus*; Græcè *Καράβιον*.” The primitive meaning of the Latin *Carabus* and the Greek *Καράβιον* is *Crab*, a word, in fact, derived from them. In either language, the word was used to signify a *vessel* or a *boat*. The word *Καράβιον* has descended to the modern Greeks, who use *Καράβι* for a *vessel*, in general; and Isidore, a late Latin writer, in his *Origines*, lib. xix. c. 1, defines a *Carabus* to be a “small skiff made of osiers, which, covered with raw leather, forms a sort of boat.” There seems, therefore, much reason to respect the authority of the historian first quoted, who describes the Caravel of the Spaniards as a light open vessel. This minuteness of criticism will, I hope, be pardoned on a subject so closely connected with the discovery of America.

Having in the beginning of this note called Peter Martyr d'Anghiera the first writer, who commemorates Columbus, (and so he is generally reputed,) it should be observed, that he is entitled to this credit of precedence, by a very slight priority. The dedication of his *Decades* bears date *Prid. Calend. October*, or *September 30, 1516*. In November of the same year, was published a *Polyglott Psalter*, at Genoa, containing the Psalms in Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, and Chaldee, in which, in the form of a note on Psalm xix. 5. *Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world*, is given an account of Columbus and his discoveries, filling seven octavo pages, as copied in a work of de Murr. This is doubtless the first account of Columbus, for P. Martyr d'Anghiera introduces him simply as “*Ligur vir*.” The editor of this *Psalter* and author of the note in question, was Guistiniani, a bishop, and as he speaks of Columbus as a native of Genoa, at a period so early, and mentions the bequest made by Columbus of the tenth part of his estates to the city of Genoa, his authority is of great weight in settling the contested points of the place of the birth of Columbus, and the authenticity of his will. Since the appearance, however, of the important and curious work entitled *Codice diplomatico Colombo-Americano ossia raccolta di documenti originali e inediti, spettanti a Christofero Colombo, alla scoperta e allo governo dell' America*, Genoa, 1823, these questions may be considered as put at rest.

This last very curious work, which has not yet attracted a due degree of notice from the public, though containing more *official* details relative to Columbus than all the other works hitherto published relative to America, was printed by order of the magistrates of Genoa. An account of the English translation of it may be found in the *North American Review* for April last, page 415. Two manuscripts, copies of the grants, patents, &c. of the Spanish government to Columbus (from one of which the work is now at length printed) were made by order of Columbus himself, and sent to his friend Oderigo, in Genoa. In 1670, the descendant of Oderigo presented the two manuscripts to the magistracy at Genoa. During the French Revolution one of the manuscripts was taken to Paris, and has not yet been restored to Genoa. The other was supposed to be lost, till on the death of Count Micheloni Cambiasi, a Senator of Genoa, it was advertised for sale among his books, but immediately claimed as public property. It has since been deposited in a monument erected for the purpose, and from it the work in question is printed.

Whether the two manuscripts thus mentioned be the only ones in existence may admit of doubt. When I was in Florence in 1818, a small folio manuscript was brought to me, written on parchment, apparently two or three centuries old, in binding once very rich, but now worn, containing

a series of documents in Latin and Spanish, mostly the latter, with the following title on the first blank page, "Traslado de las Bullas del Papa Alexandro VI, de la Concession de las Indias y los titulos, privilegios, y cedula reales, que se dieron a Christoval Colon."—I was led by this title to purchase the work; but, deterred by the abundant use of abbreviations and a limited acquaintance with the language, I made no attempt for several years to read it. My attention having been turned again to it, by the publication of the work at Genoa, and having had an opportunity, by the kindness of a friend, of seeing a copy of it, the only one perhaps in this part of the country, I was surprised to find my manuscript, as far as it goes, *nearly* identical in its contents with that of Genoa, supposed to be one of the only two in existence. My manuscript consists of about *eighty* closely written folio pages, which coincide precisely with the text of the first *thirty seven* documents, contained in two hundred and forty pages of the Genoese volume. A few more documents, wanting in my manuscript, are found in the Genoese work; and a second Bull of Alexander VI, in Latin, is contained in the former, and is wanting in the latter.

In the last of the documents, contained in the Genoese volume, and wanting in my manuscript, we read as follows;

"Los originales destos privilegios y cartas y cedulas y otras muchas cartas de sus Altezas e otras escripturas, tocantes al Señor Almirante, estan en el monasterio de Sancta Maria de las Cuevas de Sevilla.

"Otrosy esta, en el dicho Monasterio un libro traslado de los privilegios e cartas susodichos, semejante que esto.

"Otro traslado levo este año de M. D. II. y tiene Alonso Sanchez de Carvajal a las Yndias, escripto en papel e abtorizado.

"Otro traslado en pergamino tal como este."

Mention is here accordingly made of four copies of these documents, three on parchment and one on paper. Two of them were sent by Columbus himself to Genoa. Whether that procured by me at Florence be a third; whether it be that supposed to be at Paris; or, what is more probable perhaps, another copy, there are at present no means of deciding. I hope to have in my power, on some other occasion, to describe it more accurately, particularly in those respects, in which it differs from the Genoese volume.

#### Note C. Page 15.

It is probable that the great extent, to which the business of fishing on the banks of Newfoundland and the New England coasts was early carried, was one chief cause of the familiarity of men with the idea of the passage across the Atlantic, and consequently of the readiness of our forefathers to undertake it. It appears, that as early as 1578, there were employed in this fishery, of Spaniards 100 sail, besides 20 or 30 in the whale fishery on the same coasts; of Portuguese 50; of French 150; of English from 30 to 50. (*Hakluyt*, Vol. III. p. 132, cited in the *North American Review* for July, 1824, p. 140.) Captain Smith remarks, that according to "Whitbourne's discovery of Newfoundland," the banks and coasts in that region were visited by 250 sail of English fishermen annually. (Vol. II. p. 246, Richmond Edition.) So important was this work of Whitbourne esteemed for the encouragement of the British fisheries that, by an order in Council, dated 12th of April, 1622, it was ordered to be distributed to every parish in the kingdom. (*Ancient Right of the English Nation to the American Fisheries, &c.* London, 1764.) The last cited valuable treatise contains (page 50) an important statement of the amount

of the French fishery in 1745, "made in that year, at the desire of the Governor of the Massachusetts province, by Mr Thomas Kilby." By this account, it appears that "564 ships in all, and 27,500 men were yearly employed from France on the banks of Newfoundland." The extent of the British fisheries, in this quarter, on an average of three years ending 1773, may be seen in Lord Sheffield's Observations on the Commerce of the American States, 6th Ed. p. 64. From one of the documents in the work entitled, "The Fisheries and the Mississippi," by the present Secretary of State, it appears that before 1810, there were annually employed from the United States 1232 vessels in the Bank, Bay, and Labrador fisheries, navigated by 10,459 men.—See also *Seybert's Statistics*, p. 333.

Note D. Page 29.

"From the commencement of the *religious war* in Germany to the peace of Westphalia, scarce any thing great or memorable occurred in the European political world, with which the reformation was not essentially connected. Every event in the history of the world in this interval, if not directly occasioned, was nearly influenced by this religious revolution, and every state, great or small, remotely or directly experienced its influence." *Schiller's Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Krieges*. I. 1.

Note E. Page 29.

The close connexion of the religious and political system of Rome is sufficiently shown by the authority of Cicero.—He begins the Oration pro domo sua, in these words, cum multa divinitus, Pontifices, a majoribus nostris inventa atque instituta sunt; tum nihil præclarior quam quod eosdem et religionibus deorum immortalium et summæ Reipublicæ præesse voluerunt; ut amplissimi et clarissimi cives rempublicam bene gerendo religiones sapienter interpretando conservarent. Whence is it that a principle should be commended by so wise a statesman as Cicero, and in point of experience have been found so salutary in Rome, which has been uniformly productive of evil in modern states and condemned by the soundest politicians?—The cause of the apparent anomaly is no doubt to be found in the organization of the church as a separate institution, having its own principles of growth and decline; and the organization of the clergy as a body having its own interest.—Such a body, when entrusted with power in the state, will be apt to exercise it under the influence of the esprit du corps for its own advancement. In Rome, the public religion rested upon no other sanction than any other part of the public system and the ministers of religion, not belonging to a separate consecrated body, were not liable to be influenced by any other than reasons of state in the administration of their religious functions. Although such a state of things might seem unfriendly to religious influence, it produced not that effect on the Romans, who may be characterized, during the Republic, as a religious people.—

A list of the Pontifices Maximi may be found at the close of the learned treatise of Bosii *de pontifice maximo Romæ veteris*. It contains the most familiar names in the civil history of Rome. After the fall of the Republic, the Emperors regularly assumed the title of Pontifex Maximus, as is shown in another treatise of the same author, *Bosii de Pontificatu maximo imperii Romani exercitatio*. What is somewhat singular is, that this title of *High Priest*, originating in the ancient Roman paganism, should have been retained by the Christian emperors down to Gratian. It was afterwards adopted by the Popes, a circumstance which appears to have escaped Middleton in his letter from Rome.



The oft quoted exclamation of Dante, shows at how early a period the principle of the reformation had suggested itself to the independent thinkers.

Ahi, Costantin, di quanto mal fu madre,  
Non la tua conversion, ma quella dote,  
Che da te prese il primo ricco padre.

Note F. Page 30.

The treatment which Pope Boniface VIII received from Philip the fair in the fourteenth century, was as much more audacious than any thing in the recent history of the Papal see, as the power of Boniface was greater than that of Pius VII. Philip not only returned the most contemptuous answers to the Pope's letters, but sent William de Nogaret, (justly called by Mosheim, the most intrepid and inveterate enemy of the Pope before Luther) into Italy to excite a sedition, to seize the person of Boniface and bring him in chains to Lyons. This he so far effected as to get possession of the Pope, whom he loaded with indignities, and even struck on the head with an iron gauntlet. Though rescued by the citizens of Anagni, from the hands of de Nogaret, he died soon after "of the rage and anguish into which these insults threw him." It is useful to recal these traits of history, to enable us to judge more impartially of contemporary events.

Note G. Page 30.

The progress of religious reform, to which I have alluded, concerns only the connexion of church and state. As this connexion was more intimate in the Catholic church, than in any other, that church was so far the most corrupt. And as this connexion was unquestionably as prejudicial to the church, as to the state, the catholics have really as much reason to rejoice in the reformation as the protestants. There can be but little doubt, in the mind of any one who reads the history of the middle ages, that the interests of no communion of Christians have been more advanced by the reformation, than of that which regards the Pope as its head.

In like manner, in speaking of the reform carried on in England by the dissenters and puritans, no other reference is had than to the political question of the union of church and state. This union, as existing in England, I consider a great political abuse. As to the doctrinal points agitated between the catholics and protestants; the church of England and dissenters; however important they may have been at different times thought, so long as they rested within the limits of speculative theology, their settlement, one way or the other, could have had but little effect on the condition of states.

Note H. Page 31.

Bishop Burnet has discriminated the Presbyterians and Independents, in the following manner. "The main difference between these was, that the Presbyterians seemed reconcilable to the church; for they loved episcopal ordination and a liturgy, and upon some amendments seemed disposed to come into the church; and they liked the civil government and limited monarchy. But as the independents were for a commonwealth in the state, so they put all the power in the church in the people, and thought that their choice was an ordination: nor did they approve of set forms of worship." *History of his own Times*. II. 406.

This character, it must be remembered, was given of the Independents, after the times of the commonwealth in England. At the period of the first emigrations to New England, there is no reason for accusing the independents of disaffection to the civil government.

In 1619, Mr. Robinson published, at Leyden, "*Apologia pro exulibus Anglicis qui Brownistæ vulgo appellantur.*" Mosheim conjectures that the name of *Independents* may have grown out of a word in the following sentence, in which the leading principle of their religious peculiarities is expressed, "*Cætum quemlibet particularem esse totam, integram, et perfectam ecclesiam ex suis partibus constantem, immediate et independentem (quoad alias ecclesias) sub ipso Christo.*" *Apologia, Cap. V. p. 22.* Cited in *Mosheim, V. 388.*

Note I. Page 34.

A considerable, and the most elaborate part of Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, is occupied in refuting the assertion of Dr Price, that by the Revolution in 1688, the English people acquired "the right to choose their own governors, to cashier them for misconduct, and to frame a government for themselves." It is certainly too much to say, in unlimited terms, that the English Constitution, as fixed at the Revolution, gives a right of choosing or removing the king. On the other hand, it is equally certain that both at, after, and before the Revolution, Parliament claimed and exercised the right of choosing and deposing the king and limiting the succession. Burke expresses himself thus: "So far is it from being true that we acquired a right, by the Revolution, to elect our kings, that if we had possessed it before, the English nation did, at that time, most solemnly renounce and abdicate it for themselves, and for all their posterity forever. These gentlemen [Dr Price and his party] may value themselves as much as they please on their whig principles; but I never desire to be thought a better whig than Lord Somers," &c.

Lord Somers is thus particularly appealed to by Mr Burke, in support of his construction of the Constitution, because the declaration of right was drawn by him. But it is somewhat remarkable that Burke should have insisted so much on this authority, for Lord Somers printed a work in 1710, of which the title sufficiently shows the object:—"A brief history of the succession of the Crown of England; wherein facts collected from the best authorities are opposed to the novel assertors of indefeasible hereditary right." After having in this work, gone through with a masterly deduction of the history of the English crown from the establishment of it, Lord Somers sums up, as follows: "I shall leave every man to make his own observations on this historical deduction. But this one observation I believe all men must make from it; that it hath been the constant opinion of all ages, that the Parliament of England had an unquestionable power to limit, restrain, and qualify the succession as they pleased, and that in all ages they have put their power in practice; and that the historian\* had reason for saying, that seldom or never the third heir in a right descent enjoyed the crown of England!"

Note K. Page 38.

The settlements made by civilized Europeans on the coasts of America and of other countries occupied by savages, have evidently proceeded on the assumption of peculiar principles of national or rather social law.

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\* 'Daniel, fol. 5. in vita H. I.'

Not only the arbitrary kings of Spain and Portugal, but the constitutional king of England, claimed a right of occupying, possessing, and granting to individuals or companies, all newly discovered heathen lands; nor was it admitted that the natives had any right to the soil, in the same sense that citizens of one country acknowledge each other's rights, and the governments of friendly nations the rights of each other's subjects. There does not seem to be any principle of natural law, by which savage tribes can claim *full right* to the whole of the widest region, which they wander over in the chase, and to the perpetual exclusion of civilized settlers. If then savage nations have not a full right, what right have they; and to how much territory have they any right? These are questions not yet well settled.—What is the ground and extent of the obligation, which a civilized community is under, by inalienable reservations of land and by liberal appropriations of money, to introduce the arts of civilized life among border tribes of a different race and language, with whom no intermixture of blood can take place without degeneracy?—As modes of diffusing civilization most widely, is the choice well established between the increase of a civilized population and civilizing a barbarous one? These questions present themselves in their most delicate form, in the present controversy in the state of Georgia, and it may be doubted whether they are fully solved on the general notions of humanity usually applied to them, however strong and natural the prepossession felt at a distance in favor of a weaker party.

Note L. Page 40.

As it is now generally admitted that a *temperate climate* is essential to the attainment of the highest degrees of civilization, (*Heeren's Ideen Th. V. Allgemeine Vorerinnerungen,*) there is more reason than ever to depart from the ancient phraseology of *Zones*, in the use of which we almost unconsciously connect the idea of certain degrees of heat or cold with certain parallels of latitude. The remarks in the text, relative to tropical regions, must of course be confined to tropical climates. Our own continents present the most striking instances of the change of climate; and of natural productions, state of civilization, and social character, as affected by climate; in travelling, on the same parallel, from the coasts to the summits of the mountains.

The Atlas of Humboldt contains a curious comparative view of the different altitude of the limit of perpetual congelation in different latitudes. And his *Essay on Isothermal lines*, as well as various parts of his large works, furnish the most instructive illustrations of the same subject. See particularly his *Relation Historique*, Tom. II p. 350.

Note M. Page 41.

"I doubt if there be another plant upon the face of the earth, which, on a small space of soil, produces a quantity of nutritious substance so considerable as the banana. Eight or nine months after the sucker is planted, the banana tree begins to develope its cluster, and the fruit may be gathered the tenth or eleventh month. When the stalk is cut, there is constantly found among the numerous shoots, which have sprung from the roots, a sprout (*pimpollo*) which with two thirds the height of the parent plant, bears fruit three months later. It is thus that a plantation of banana, which is called in the Spanish colonies a *Platanar*, perpetuates itself without any other care than that of cutting the stalks, whose fruit has ripened, and digging the earth slightly about the roots once or twice

a year. A spot of ground of one hundred square metres (about one tenth more than so many square yards) in surface, is sufficient to contain at least from thirty to forty banana plants. This spot of ground, reckoning the weight of the cluster only at from about thirty five to forty five pounds, would yield nearly four thousand five hundred weight of food. What a difference between this product and that of the cereal gramina, in the most fertile parts of Europe. Wheat, supposing it sown and not planted, in the Chinese way, and calculating on the basis of a tenfold increase, does not produce, on a hundred square metres, more than about thirty three pounds weight of grain. In France the legal acre of 54,995 square feet, is sown broadcast in very good land, with about 160 pounds of grain, on medium and poor land with from 200 to 220 pounds; and the produce varies from 1000 to 2500 pounds the acre. The potato, according to M. Tessier yields in Europe, on one hundred square metres of land well manured, about one hundred pounds of the root; or from four to six thousand pounds on the acre of France. The product of the banana is consequently to that of wheat as 133 to 1; and to that of potatoes as 44 to 1."

"In an eminently fertile country, a legal French acre cultivated with banana of the larger kind (*Platano Arton*) would feed more than fifty persons for a year; while in Europe the same acre, on the principle of an eight fold increase, would yield but about twelve hundred pounds of wheat, a quantity not equal to the support for a year of two persons."—*Humboldt Essai Politique sur le Royaume de la Nouvelle Espagne*. Tom. III. 28, 35.

Note N. Page 43.

It need not be said, that the remarks, which are made in the text, relative to the colonial establishments of different nations on the American soil, can be intended to convey no disrespectful insinuation toward the free states now rising upon those colonial foundations.—The very magnitude of the abuses of the ancient system is among the causes of the convulsive efforts, which have been made, in our days, against those abuses; and the Patriots, who, under infinite discouragements, have effected thus far the political regeneration of those vast regions, are entitled to the greater praise for the difficulties incident to their enterprise. But that they are under no obligation to principles and examples derived from the mother country; that the institutions established in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, instead of serving as a school of freedom—like the colonial institutions in the North American colonies—were of a nature to retard the growth of independence, cannot be doubted.—Even in establishing a form of free government, the leaders of the revolution in Colombia, have been obliged to express their regret that the state of the country and of its population did not allow them to prefer the *Federative System* of the United States to the less perfect *Central System*, which they have adopted.—See the opinions of Bolivar and M. de Salazar as quoted in the *North American Review* for Jan. 1825. p. 79.

Note O. Page 44.

Few questions in Geography have been the subject of more important controversies than the limits of Brazil. It is not a little astonishing to see states like Spain and Portugal, which had respectively by the discovery of America and the passage of the Cape of Good Hope, made the acquisition of new territory larger than Europe, contesting with bitterness a few square leagues of morass on the banks of the Amazon and

its tributaries.—The facts, on which the controversies alluded to turned, are principally these. Pope Nicholas V, in 1454, granted to Alfonso King of Portugal, in full sovereignty, all the countries, which he should discover from Cape Non in Africa to India.\* About the time of this grant the navigators of Portugal discovered the Cape de Verde Islands, and the Azores. In 1486, the Portuguese navigator Diaz discovered the Cape of Good Hope. In 1492 Columbus discovered America; and controversies immediately arose between the Courts of Spain and Portugal, relative to the interference of their several discoveries. To settle this controversy the Spanish Court procured of Pope Alexander VI, (himself a Spaniard,) the famous bull bearing date May 1493, in which he gives to the king of Spain, in full sovereignty, “All the islands and continents which are or may be found, (Omnes insulas et terras firmas inventas et inveniendas, detectas et detegendas,) to the south and west of a meridian line drawn one hundred leagues south of the southernmost of the Azores or Cape de Verde Islands.—This is the famous “*line of demarcation*,” for though, (contrary to the popular representation) nothing is said, in this bull, of the right of the Portuguese to all discoveries east of the line, yet the former Papal grant to Portugal, already mentioned, had given to that kingdom the sovereignty over its discoveries in the east. The Portuguese having shortly after acquired Brazil, by the discoveries of Pinzon, who had been of the company of Columbus on his first voyage, it was perceived that it lay to the *westward* of the line of demarcation, and of course was subject to the Spanish claim. By the treaty of Tordesillas, in 1494, these conflicting rights were compromised, and the sovereigns of Spain and Portugal agreed to run the line three hundred and seventy leagues west of that prescribed by the Pope’s bull. This memorable line, by which the territory of three fourth parts of the globe was divided, was to be run by skilful geographers, within ten months. Herrera (*Decad. III. lib. VI.*) describes, in a manner approaching the ludicrous, the array of maps, charts, globes, and instruments, which the geographers brought to this discussion; and Humboldt justly remarks in reference to these and other kindred contests, (*Relation Historique, Tom. II. p. 441.*) that the interests of science alone have been served by them. While the question was keenly agitated between the Portuguese and Spanish geographers, the former striving to run the line as far west and the latter as far east as possible, the discovery and occupation of the Moluccas by the Portuguese, completely inverted the policy of both parties. These valuable islands were perceived to be nearly opposite the Cape de Verdes, on the other side of the globe; and the farther to the west of the Cape de Verdes the line of demarcation was run, so much more of the Moluccas and other neighboring islands would fall within the Spanish hemisphere. The Portuguese geographers *now* contended that the line of demarcation should be counted 370 leagues from a line running through the isle of *Salis*, the easternmost of the Cape de Verdes, while the Spaniards counted the 370 leagues from a line running through St Antonio, which was ninety leagues more to the west, and was the most western of the group;—each party being anxious to lose in Brazil, that it might gain in the Spice islands.—The controversy was protracted for many years, till in 1580, it was, for a time, settled by the union of the two crowns of Spain and Portugal. (*De Laet, Novus Orbis, p. 541.*)

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\* See the original document in the great Corps Diplomatique. Tom. III. p. 200.

After their separation in 1640, the contest was revived. But the Spice islands having been wrested from the Portuguese by the Dutch, the controversy between the Portuguese and the Spaniards was now reduced to the limits of Brazil. The parties accordingly again changed sides; the Portuguese geographers, at the conferences held at Puente de Caya in 1682, maintained that the 370 leagues must be counted from the most western point of St Antonio, while the Spaniards insisted on the centre of the isle St Nicholas. Two or three commissions, at great expense, were sent out, in the course of the last century, to settle the possession of the uninhabited swamps on the banks of the Tuamini;—the region which was constituted debateable ground by the uncertainty of the point, through which the meridian line should be run.—(*Humboldt Relation Historique*, Tom. II. p. 442.)

In the first volume of M. Martens' supplement to the *Recueil des Traites*, p. 372, the treaty of Tordesillas is contained, and in no previous collection of treaties. The limit of the Oyapok, Oyapoco, or Iapoc, was finally settled by the 107th Article of the Act of the Congress of Vienna; and by a separate convention therein provided for, between Portugal and France.

Note P. Page 45.

A more than ordinary identity of interest and character was effected between Portugal and Brazil; and this vast region was even called by the name of Portugal. "On the banks of the Rio Negro," says Humboldt, in the chapter cited in the last note, "the neighboring country beyond the Amazon is called, in the language of the Spanish Missions, neither Brazil nor the *Capitania general* of Grand Pará, but *Portugal*. The copper colored Indians and the Mulattos, which I have seen ascending from Barcelos to the Spanish fort San Carlos, are *Portuguese*. This denomination prevails among the people even to the coasts of Cumana. A favorite anecdote relates, how the imagination of one of the commandants in the expedition of Solano to settle the limits, in 1754, was struck, by hearing the inhabitants of these regions called *Portuguese*. The old soldier, as ignorant as brave, was provoked at having been sent to the banks of the Orenoque by sea: "If" said he, "as I hear, this vast province of Spanish Guyana reaches all the way to Portugal, (a los Portugeses,) why did the king make us sail from Cadiz. I should have preferred travelling a little farther by land."—"These expressions of *naïve* ignorance," adds Humboldt, "remind one of a strange opinion of Lorenzana the distinguished archbishop of Mexico. This prelate, a person of great historical research, observes in his edition of the letters of Cortes, published so late as 1770, that the possessions of the king of Spain in New California and New Mexico, border by land on *Siberia*!"

These anecdotes alone may serve as an index to the colonial systems of Spain and Portugal, whose archbishops and commissioners for settling limits supposed, in the middle of the last century, that Brazil was bounded by Portugal and New Mexico by Siberia.

Note Q. Page 52.

The sentiment in the text is very strongly illustrated by the statements contained in Pringle's account of the present state of "the English settlers at the Cape of Good Hope." From that work, it appears that ninety thousand persons besieged Earl Bathurst's office, with applications to embark in the government expedition, to found the colony in question. The calamitous consequences are detailed in the work alluded to.

## Note R. Page 58.

The constitution of the Mexican confederacy was adopted by the general constituent Congress Oct. 4. 1824, and may be found translated in the National Journal for Dec. 10 and 11th.

The Mexican confederacy consists of the following states and territories; the states of Chiapas, Chihuahua, Coahuila y Tejas, Durango, Guanajuato, Mexico, Michoacan, Nuevo Leon, Oajaca, Puebla de los Angeles, Queretaro, San Luis Potosi, Sonara y Sinaloa, Tabasco, Tamaulipas (?) Vera Cruz, Ialisco, Yucatan, and Zacatecas; the territories of upper and lower California, Colima, and Santa Fe of New Mexico. The character of Tlaxcala is to be fixed by a constitutional law.

It will be observed that the division into states and territories does not precisely correspond with the old division into intendencies.

## Note S. Page 59.

“The following are a few of the subjects of the political essays of the Censor (a periodical paper published at Buenos Ayres) in 1817: an explanation of the Constitution of the United States, and highly praised—The Lancastrian System of Education—on the causes of the prosperity of the United States—Milton’s essay on the liberty of the press—A review of the work of the late President Adams, on the American Constitution, and a recommendation of checks and balances, continued through several numbers and abounding with much useful information for the people—brief notice of the life of James Monroe, president of the United States—examination of the federative system—on the trial by Jury—on popular elections—on the effect of enlightened productions on the condition of mankind—an analysis of the several state constitutions of the Union, &c.

“There are in circulation, Spanish translations of many of our best revolutionary writings. The most common are two miscellaneous volumes, one, containing Paine’s common sense and rights of man, and declaration of Independence, several of our constitutions, and General Washington’s farewell address. The other is an abridged history of the United States down to the year 1810, with a good explanation of the nature of our political institutions, accompanied with a translation of Mr Jefferson’s inaugural speech, and other state papers. I believe these have been read by nearly all who can read, and have produced a most extravagant admiration of the United States, at the same time, accompanied with something like despair.”—Breckenridge’s South America, Vol. II. pp. 213, 214.





AN  
ORATION

*Delivered at Concord,*

APRIL THE NINETEENTH,

1825.

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BY EDWARD EVERETT.

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BOSTON :

PUBLISHED BY CUMMINGS, HILLIARD, AND COMPANY.

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1825.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO WIT:

*District Clerk's Office.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the twenty-first day of May, A. D. 1825, in the forty-ninth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Cummings, Hilliard, & Co. of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

“An Oration delivered at Concord, April the nineteenth. 1825. By Edward Everett.”

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned:” and also to an Act, entitled, “An Act, supplementary to an Act, entitled, “An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;” and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical, and other prints.”

JNO W. DAVIS,

*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

*Concord, April 19, 1825.*

HON. EDWARD EVERETT,

Dear Sir,

The Committee of Arrangements have instructed me to express their thanks to you, for the very interesting address delivered by you this day, and to request you to favor them with a copy for the press.

Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

N. BROOKS, { For the  
Committee.



# ORATION.

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FELLOW CITIZENS,

THE voice of patriotic and filial duty has called us together, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of an ever memorable day. The subject, which this occasion presents to our consideration, almost exceeds the grasp of the human mind. The appearance of a new state in the great family of nations is one of the most important topics of reflection, that can ever be addressed to us. In the case of America, the interest, the magnitude, and the difficulty of this subject are immeasurably increased. Our progress has been so rapid, the interval has been so short between the first plantations in the wilderness and the full development of our political institutions ; there has been such a visible agency of single characters in affecting the

condition of the country, such an almost instantaneous expansion of single events into consequences of incalculable importance, that we find ourselves deserted by almost all the principles and precedents, drawn from the analogy of other states. Men have here seen, felt, and acted themselves, what in most other countries has been the growth of centuries.

Take your station for instance on Connecticut river. Every thing about you, whatsoever you behold or approach, bears witness, that you are a citizen of a powerful and prosperous state. It is just seventy years, since the towns, which you now contemplate with admiration as the abodes of a numerous, increasing, refined, enterprising population, safe in the enjoyment of life's best blessings, were wasted and burned by the savages of the wilderness; and their inhabitants by hundreds,—the old and the young, the minister of the gospel, and the mother with her new born babe,—were wakened at midnight by the warhoop, dragged from their beds, and marched with bleeding feet across the snow-clad mountains,—to be sold as slaves into the cornfields and kitchens of the French in Canada. Go back eighty years farther; and the same barbarous foe is on the skirts of your

oldest settlements, at your own doors. As late as 1676, ten or twelve citizens of Concord were slain or carried into captivity, who had gone to meet the savage hordes in their attack on Sudbury, in which the brave Captain Wadsworth and his companions fell.

These contrasts regard the political strength of our country; the growth in national resources presents a case of increase still more astonishing, though less adapted to move the feelings. By the last valuation, the aggregate property of Massachusetts is estimated at something less than three hundred millions. By the valuation made in 1780, the property of Massachusetts and Maine was estimated at eleven millions.

This unexampled rapidity of our national growth, while it gives to our history more than the interest of romance, leaves us often in doubt, what is to be ascribed to the cooperation of a train of incidents and characters, following in long succession upon each other; and what is to be referred to the vast influence of single important events. On the one hand, we think we trace a series of causes and effects, running back into the history of the dark ages in Europe, and visibly exerting an influence on the American colonies;

and on the other, we witness a rapidity, an energy, a precision in the movements of the nation toward improvement and power, which seem to characterize the agency of individual events and men. In the first view, we feel constrained to surrender up the fortunes of our country, as a portion of the chain of events, which lengthens onward, by blind fatality, from the creation of the world, and brings about, in each successive age, the same routine of rise, progress, and decay. In the other view, we behold the action of a new and original political life, a fresh and hopeful national existence ; nourished, strengthened, and matured under the operation of peculiar causes of unexampled energy.

That great, that astonishing incident in human affairs, the Revolution of America, as seen on the day of its portentous, or rather let me say, of its auspicious commencement, is the theme of our present consideration. To what shall we direct our thoughts ? On the one hand, we behold a connexion of events ; the time and circumstances of the original discovery ; the system of colonization ; the settlements of the pilgrims ; their condition, temper, and institutions ; their singular political relation with the mother country ; their



long and doubtful struggle with the savage tribes ; their collisions with the royal governors ; their co-operation in the British wars ; with all the influences of their geographical and physical condition ; uniting to constitute what I may call the political national education of America, by forming the public mind, nerving the arm, and firing the heart for the events of that day, which we now commemorate. When we take this survey, we feel that we ought to divide the honors of the Revolution with the great men of the colony in every generation ; with the Winslows and the Pepperells, the Cookes and the Mathers, the Winthrops and the Bradfords, and all who labored and acted in the cabinet, the desk, or the field, for the one great cause. On the other hand, when we dwell upon the day itself, every thing else seems lost in the comparison. Had our forefathers failed, on that day of trial, which we now celebrate ; had their votes and their resolves (as was tauntingly predicted on both sides of the Atlantic) ended in the breath, in which they began ; had the rebels laid down their arms, as they were commanded ; and the military stores, which had been frugally treasured up for this crisis, been, without resistance, destroyed ;--then the Revolution had been

at an end, or rather never had been begun; the heads of Hancock and Adams and their brave colleagues would have been exposed in ghastly triumph on Temple-bar; a military despotism would have been firmly fixed in the colonies; the patriots of Massachusetts would have been doubly despised, the scorn of their enemies, the scorn of their deluded countrymen; the cry of liberty, which they had raised from the shore to the mountains, would have been turned back in a cry of disdain; and the heart of this great people, then beating and almost bursting for freedom, would have been struck cold and dead, and, for aught we can now reason, forever.

There are those, who object to such a celebration as this, as tending to keep up or to awaken a hostile sentiment toward England. But I do not feel the force of this scruple. In the first place, it was not England, but the English ministerial party of the day, and a small circle in that party, which projected the measures that resulted in our Revolution. The rights of America found steady and powerful asserters in England. Lord Chatham declared to the House of Peers that he was glad America had resisted, and alluding to the fact that he had a son in the British army, he

added, "that none of his blood should serve in this detested cause." Nay, even the ministers that imposed the stamp duty, the measure which hastened the spirit of America to a crisis, which it might not have reached in a century, Lord Mansfield, the Duke of Grafton, the Earl of Shelburne, Lord Camden, rose, one after another, and asserted in the House of Lords, that they had no share in the measures which were proposed by the very cabinet, of which they were leading members. /

But I must go further. Did faithful history compel us to cast on all England united the reproach of those measures, which drove our fathers to arms; and were it, in consequence, the unavoidable effect of these celebrations to revive the feelings of revolutionary times in the bosoms of the aged; to kindle those feelings anew, in the susceptible hearts of the young; it would still be our duty, on every becoming occasion, in the strongest colors, and in the boldest lines we can command, to retrace the picture of the times that tried men's souls. We owe it to our fathers, we owe it to our children. A pacific and friendly feeling towards England is the duty of this nation; but it is not our only duty, it is not our first duty.

America owes an earlier and a higher duty to the great and good men, who caused her to be a nation; who, at an expense of treasure, a contempt of peril, a prodigality of blood—the purest and noblest that ever flowed,—of which we can now hardly conceive, vindicated to this continent a place among the nations of the earth. I cannot consent, out of tenderness to the memory of the Gages, the Hutchinsons, the Grenvilles and Norths, the Dartmouths and Hillsboroughs, to cast a veil over the labors and the sacrifices of the Quineys, the Adamses, the Hancocks, and the Warrens. I am not willing to give up to the ploughshare the soil wet with our fathers' blood; no! not even to plant the olive of peace in the furrow.

There is not a people on earth so abject, as to think that national courtesy requires them to hush up the tale of the glorious exploits of their fathers and countrymen. France is at peace with Austria and Prussia; but she does not demolish her beautiful bridges, baptized with the names of the battle fields, where Napoleon annihilated their armies; nor tear down the columns, moulten out of the accumulated heaps of their captive artillery. England is at peace with France and Spain, but

does she suppress the names of Trafalgar and the Nile ; does she overthrow the towers of Blenheim castle, eternal monuments of the disasters of France ; does she tear down from the rafters of her chapels, where they have for ages waved in triumph, consecrated to the God of battles, the banners of Cressy and Agincourt ?—No ; she is wiser ; wiser, did I say ? she is truer, juster to the memory of her fathers and the spirit of her children. The national character, in some of its most important elements, must be formed, elevated, and strengthened from the materials which history presents. The great objection which has been urged, and urged at the point of the bayonet and at the mouth of the cannon, by the partisans of arbitrary power in Europe, against revolutionary and popular governments, is, that they want a historical basis, which alone, they say, can impart stability and legality to public institutions. But certainly the historical basis is of much greater moment to the spirit, than to the institutions of a people ; and for the reason, that the spirit itself of a nation is far more important than its institutions at any moment. Let the spirit be sound and true, and it will sooner or later find or make a remedy for defective institutions. But though the insti-

tutions should surpass, in theoretic beauty, the fabled perfection of Utopia or Atlantis, without a free spirit, the people will be slaves ; they will be slaves of the most despicable kind,—pretended freemen.

And how is the spirit of a people to be formed and animated and cheered, but out of the storehouse of its historic recollections ? Are we to be eternally ringing the changes upon Marathon and Thermopylæ ; and going back to read in obscure texts of Greek and Latin of the great exemplars of patriotic virtue ? I thank God, that we can find them nearer home, in our own country, on our own soil ;—that strains of the noblest sentiment, that ever swelled in the breast of man, are breathing to us out of every page of our country's history, in the native eloquence of our mother tongue ;—that the colonial and the provincial councils of America, exhibit to us models of the spirit and character, which gave Greece and Rome their name and their praise among the nations. Here we ought to go for our instruction ;—the lesson is plain, it is clear, it is applicable. When we go to ancient history, we are bewildered with the difference of manners and institutions.

We are willing to pay our tribute of applause to the memory of Leonidas, who fell nobly for his country, in the face of the foe. But when we trace him to his home, we are confounded at the reflection, that the same Spartan heroism to which he sacrificed himself at Thermopylæ, would have led him to tear his only child, if it happened to be a sickly babe—the very object for which all that is kind and good in man rises up to plead—from the bosom of its mother, and carry it out to be eaten by the wolves of Taygetus. We feel a glow of admiration at the heroism displayed at Marathon, by the ten thousand champions of invaded Greece ; but we cannot forget that the tenth part of the number were slaves, unchained from the workshops and door-posts of their masters, to go and fight the battles of freedom. I do not mean that these examples are to destroy the interest with which we read the history of ancient times ; they possibly increase that interest, by the singular contrast they exhibit. But they do warn us, if we need the warning, to seek our great practical lessons of patriotism at home ; out of the exploits and sacrifices, of which our own country is the theatre ; out of the characters of our own fathers. Them we know, the high-souled,

natural, unaffected, the citizen heroes. We know what happy firesides they left for the cheerless camp. We know with what pacific habits they dared the perils of the field. There is no mystery, no romance, no madness, under the name of chivalry, about them. It is all resolute, manly resistance, for conscience' and liberty's sake, not merely of an overwhelming power, but of all the force of long-rooted habits, and native love of order and peace.

Above all, their blood calls to us from the soil which we tread ; it beats in our veins ; it cries to us, not merely in the thrilling words of one of the first victims in this cause,—“ My sons, scorn to be slaves ; ”—but it cries with a still more moving eloquence—“ My sons, forget not your fathers.” Fast, oh, too fast, with all our efforts to prevent it, their precious memories are dying away.

Notwithstanding our numerous written memorials, much of what is known of those eventful times dwells but in the recollection of a few revered survivors, and with them is rapidly perishing, unrecorded and irretrievable. ✓ How many prudent counsels, conceived in perplexed times ; how many heart-stirring words, uttered when liberty was treason ; how many brave and heroic deeds,



performed when the halberd, not the laurel, was the promised meed of patriotic daring,—are already lost and forgotten in the graves of their authors. How little do we,—although we have been permitted to hold converse with the venerable remnants of that day,—how little do we know of their dark and anxious hours; of their secret meditations; of the hurried and perilous events of the momentous struggle. And while they are dropping round us like the leaves of autumn, while scarce a week passes that does not call away some member of the veteran ranks, already so sadly thinned, shall we make no effort to hand down the traditions of their day to our children; to pass the torch of liberty, which we received in all the splendour of its first enkindling, bright and flaming to those who stand next us in the line; so that when we shall come to be gathered to the dust where our fathers are laid, we may say to our sons and our grandsons, “If we did not amass, we have not squandered your inheritance of glory?”

Let us then faithfully go back to those all-important days. Let us commemorate the events, with which the momentous revolutionary crisis was brought on; let us gather up the traditions which still exist; let us show the world, that if

we are not called to follow the example of our fathers, we are at least not insensible to the worth of their characters ; not indifferent to the sacrifices and trials, by which they purchased our prosperity.

Time would fail us to recount the measures by which the way was prepared for the revolution ;— the stamp act ; its repeal, with the declaration of the right to tax America ; the landing of troops in Boston, beneath the batteries of fourteen vessels of war, lying broadside to the town, with springs on their cables, their guns loaded, and matches smoking ; the repeated insults, and finally the massacre of the fifth of March, resulting from this military occupation ; and the Boston Port-Bill, by which the final catastrophe was hurried on. Nor can we dwell upon the appointment at Salem, on the seventeenth of June 1774, of the delegates to the continental congress ; of the formation at Salem, in the following October, of the provincial congress ; of the decided measures, which were taken by that noble assembly, at Concord and at Cambridge ; of the preparations they made against the worst, by organizing the militia, providing stores, and appointing commanders. All this was done by the close of the year 1774.

At length the memorable year of 1775 arrived. The plunder of the provincial stores at Medford, and the attempt to seize the cannon at Salem, had produced a highly irritated state of the public mind. The friends of our rights in England made a vigorous effort, in the month of March, to avert the tremendous crisis that impended. On the twenty-second of that month, Mr Burke spoke the last word of conciliation and peace. He spoke it in a tone and with a power befitting the occasion and the man ;—he spoke it to the northwest wind. Eight days after, at that season of the year when the prudent New England husbandman repairs the inclosures of his field, for the protection of the fruits of nature's bounty which ere long will cover them, General Gage sent out a party of eleven hundred men to overthrow the stone walls in the neighbourhood of Boston, by way of opening and levelling the arena for the bloody contest he designed to bring on. With the same view, in the months of February and March, his officers were sent in disguise to traverse the country, to make military surveys and sketches of its roads and passes, to obtain accounts of the stores at Concord and Worcester, and to communicate with the small number of disaffected Americans. These

disguised officers were here at Concord, on the twentieth of March ; and received treacherous or unsuspecting information of the places, where the provincial stores were concealed. I mention this only to show, that our fathers, in their arduous contest, had every thing to contend with ; secret as well as open foes ; treachery in the cabinet, as well as power in the field. But I need not add, that they possessed not only the courage and the resolution, but the vigilance and care, demanded for the crisis. In November 1774, a society had been formed in Boston, principally of the mechanics of that town,—a class of men to whom the revolutionary cause was as deeply indebted, as to any other in America,—for the express purpose of closely watching the movements of the open and secret foes of the country. In the long and dreary nights of a New England winter, they patrolled the streets ; and not a movement, which concerned the cause, escaped their vigilance. Not a measure of the royal governor, but was in their possession, in a few hours after it was communicated to his confidential officers. Nor was it manly patriotism alone, whose spirit was thus aroused in the cause. The daughters of America were inspired with the same noble temper, that animated their fathers,

their husbands, and their brethren. The historian tells us, that the first intimation communicated to the patriots of the impending commencement of hostilities, came from a daughter of liberty, unequally yoked with an enemy of her country's rights.

With all these warnings, and all the vigilance with which the royal troops were watched, none supposed the fatal moment was hurrying so rapidly on. On Saturday, April fifteenth, the Provincial Congress adjourned their session in this place, to meet on the tenth of May. On the very same day, Saturday the fifteenth of April, the companies of grenadiers and light infantry in Boston, the flower not merely of the royal garrison, but of the British army, were taken off their regular duty, under the pretence of learning a new military exercise. At the midnight following, the boats of the transport ships, which had been previously repaired, were launched, and moored for safety under the sterns of the vessels of war. Not one of these movements,—least of all, that which took place beneath the shades of midnight,—was unobserved by the vigilant sons of liberty. The next morning, Colonel Paul Revere, a very active member of the patriotic society just mentioned, was despatched by Dr Joseph Warren to John

Hancock and Samuel Adams, then at Lexington, whose seizure was threatened by the royal governor. So early did these distinguished patriots receive the intelligence, that preparations for an important movement were on foot. Justly considering, however, that some object besides the seizure of two individuals was probably designed, in the movement of so large a force, they counselled the Committee of Safety to order the distribution into the neighbouring towns, of the stores collected at Concord. Colonel Revere, on his return from this excursion on the sixteenth of April, in order to guard against any accident, which might make it impossible at the last moment to give information from Boston of the departure of the troops, concerted with his friends in Charlestown, that whenever the British forces should embark in their boats to cross into the country, two lanterns should be shown in North Church steeple, and one, should they march out by Roxbury.

Thus was the meditated blow prepared for before it was struck ; and we almost smile at the tardy prudence of the British commander, who, on Tuesday the eighteenth of April, despatched ten sergeants, who were to dine at Cambridge, and at

nightfall scatter themselves on the roads from Boston to Concord, to prevent notice of the projected expedition from reaching the country. *Concord*

At length the momentous hour arrives, as big with consequences to man, as any that ever struck in his history. The darkness of night is still to shroud the rash and fatal measures, with which the liberty of America is hastened on. The highest officers in the British army are as yet ignorant of the nature of the meditated blow. At nine o'clock in the evening of the eighteenth, Lord Percy is sent for by the governor to receive the information of the design. On his way back to his lodgings, he finds the very movements, which had been just communicated to him in confidence by the commander in chief, a subject of conversation in a group of patriotic citizens in the street. He hastens back to General Gage and tells him he is betrayed; and orders are instantly given to permit no American to leave the town. But the order is five minutes too late. Dr Warren, the President of the Committee of Safety, though he had returned at nightfall from the meeting at West Cambridge, was already in possession of the whole design; and instantly despatched two messengers to Lexington, Mr William Dawes,

who went out by Roxbury, and Colonel Paul Revere, who crossed to Charlestown. The Colonel received this summons, at ten o'clock on Tuesday night; the lanterns were immediately lighted up in North Church steeple; and in this way, before a man of the soldiery was embarked in the boats, the news of their coming was travelling with the rapidity of light, through the country.\*

Having accomplished this precautionary measure, Colonel Revere repaired to the north part of the town, where he constantly kept a boat in readiness, in which he was now rowed by two friends across the river, a little to the eastward of the spot where the Somerset man-of-war was moored, between Boston and Charlestown. It was then young flood, the ship was swinging round upon the tide, and the moon was just rising upon this midnight scene of solemn anticipation. Colonel Revere was safely landed in Charlestown, where his signals had already been observed. He procured a horse from Deacon Larkin for the further pursuit of his errand. That he would not be permitted to accomplish it, without risk of interruption, was evident from the in-

\* See note A.



formation which he received from Mr Richard Devens, a member of the Committee of Safety, that on his way from West Cambridge, where the committee sat, he had encountered several British officers, well armed and mounted, going up the road.

At eleven o'clock, Colonel Revere started upon his eventful errand. After passing Charlestown neck, he saw two men on horseback under a tree. On approaching them he perceived them by the light of the moon to be British officers. One of them immediately tried to intercept, and the other to seize him. The Colonel instantly turned back toward Charlestown, and then struck into the Medford road. The officer in pursuit of him, endeavouring to cut him off, plunged into a clay-pond, in the corner between the two roads, and the Colonel escaped. He accordingly pursued his way to Medford, awoke the captain of the minute men there, and giving the alarm at every house on the road, passed on through West Cambridge to Lexington. There he delivered his message to Messrs Hancock and Adams,\* and there also he was shortly after joined by Mr William Dawes, the messenger who had gone out by Roxbury.

\* See note B.

After staying a short time at Lexington, Messrs Revere and Dawes, at about one o'clock of the morning of the nineteenth of April, started for Concord, to communicate the intelligence there. They were soon overtaken on the way by Dr Samuel Prescott of Concord, who joined them in giving the alarm at every house on the road. About half way from Lexington to Concord, while Dawes and Prescott were alarming a house on the road, Revere, being about one hundred rods in advance, saw two officers in the road, of the same appearance as those he had escaped in Charlestown. He called to his companions to assist him in forcing his way through them, but was himself instantly surrounded by four officers. These officers had previously thrown down the wall into an adjoining field, and the Americans, prevented from forcing their way onward, passed into the field. Dr Prescott, although the reins of his horse had been cut in the struggle with the officers, succeeded, by leaping a stone wall, in making his escape from the field and reaching Concord. Revere aimed at a wood, but was there encountered by six more officers, and was with his companion made prisoner. The British officers, who had already seized three other Americans, having

learned from their prisoners that the whole country was alarmed, thought it best for their own safety to hasten back, taking their prisoners with them. Near Lexington meetinghouse, on their return, the British officers heard the militia, who were on parade, firing a volley of guns. Terrified at this, they compelled Revere to give up his horse, and then pushing forward at full gallop, escaped down the road.

The morning was now advanced to about four o'clock, nor was it then known at Lexington that the British were so near at hand. Colonel Revere again sought Messrs Hancock and Adams at the house of the Reverend Mr Clark, and it was thought expedient by their friends, who had kept watch there during the night, that these eminent patriots should remove toward Woburn. Having attended them to a house on the Woburn road, where they proposed to stop, Colonel Revere returned to Lexington to watch the progress of events. He soon met a person at full gallop, who informed him that the British troops were coming up the road. Hastening now to the public house, to secure some papers of Messrs Hancock and Adams, Colonel Revere saw the British troops pressing forward in full array.

It was now seven hours, since these troops were put in motion. They were mustered at ten o'clock of the night preceding, on the Boston Common, and embarked, to the number of eight hundred grenadiers and light infantry, in the boats of the British squadron. They landed at Phipps' Farm, a little to the south of Lechmere's Point, and on disembarking, a day's provision was dealt out to them. Pursuing the path across the marshes, they emerged into the old Charlestown and West Cambridge road.

And here let us pause a moment in the narration, to ask, who are the men and what is the cause? Is it an army of Frenchmen and Canadians, who in earlier days had often run the line between them and us, with havock and fire, and who have now come to pay back the debt of defeat and subjugation? Or is it their ancient ally of the woods, the stealthy savage,—borne in his light canoe, with muffled oars, over the midnight waters,—creeping like the felon wolf through our villages, that he may start up at dawn, to wage a war of surprise, of plunder, and of horror against the slumbering cradle and the defenceless fireside? O no! It is the disciplined armies of a brave, a christian, a kindred people; led by

gallant officers, the choice sons of England; and they are going to seize, and secure for the halter, men whose crime is, that they have dared to utter in the English tongue, on this side of the ocean, the principles which gave, and give England her standing among the nations; they are going to plunge their swords in the breasts of men, who fifteen years before, on the plains of Abraham, stood, and fought, and conquered by their side. But they go not unobserved; the tidings of their approach are travelling before them; the faithful messengers have aroused the citizens from their slumbers; alarm guns are answering to each other, and spreading the news from village to village; the tocsin is heard, at this unnatural hour, from steeples, that never before rung with any other summons than that of the gospel of peace; the sacred tranquillity of the hour is startled with all the mingled sounds of preparation,—of gathering bands, and resolute though unorganized resistance.

The Committee of Safety, as has been observed, had set, the preceding day, at West Cambridge; and three of its respected members, Gerry, Lee, and Orne, had retired to sleep, in the public house, where the session of the committee was held. So difficult was it, notwithstanding all that had passed,

to realize that a state of things could exist, between England and America, in which American citizens should be liable to be torn from their beds by an armed force at midnight, that the members of the Committee of Safety, though forewarned of the approach of the British troops, did not even think it necessary to retire from their lodgings. On the contrary, they rose from their beds and went to their windows to gaze on the unwonted sight, the midnight march of armies through the peaceful hamlets of New England. Half the column had already passed, when a flank guard was promptly detached to search the public house, no doubt in the design of arresting the members of the Committee of Safety, who might be there. It was only at this last critical moment, that Mr Gerry and his friends bethought themselves of flight, and without time even to clothe themselves, escaped naked into the fields.

By this time Colonel Smith, who commanded the expedition, appears to have been alarmed at the indications of a general rising throughout the country. The light infantry companies were now detached and placed under the command of Major Pitcairne, for the purpose of hastening forward, to secure the bridges at Concord; and thus cut off

the communication between this place and the towns north and west of it. Before these companies could reach Lexington, the officers already mentioned, who had arrested Colonel Revere, joined their advancing countrymen, and reported that five hundred men were drawn up in Lexington, to resist the king's troops. On receiving this exaggerated account, the British light infantry was halted, to give time for the grenadiers to come up, that the whole together might move forward to the work of death.

The company assembled on Lexington Green, which the British officers, in their report, had swelled to five hundred, consisted of sixty or seventy of the militia of the place. Information had been received about nightfall, both by private means and by communications from the Committee of Safety, that a strong party of officers had been seen on the road, directing their course toward Lexington. In consequence of this intelligence, a body of about thirty of the militia, well armed, assembled early in the evening; a guard of eight men under Colonel William Munroe, then a sergeant in the company, was stationed at Mr Clark's; and three men were sent off to give the alarm at Concord. These three messengers were

however stopped on their way, as has been mentioned, by the British officers, who had already passed onward. One of their number, Elijah Sanderson, has lately died at Salem at an advanced age. A little after midnight, as has been observed, Messrs Revere and Dawes arrived with the certain information, that a very large body of the royal troops was in motion. The alarm was now generally given to the inhabitants of Lexington, messengers were sent down the road to ascertain the movements of the troops, and the militia company under Captain John Parker appeared on the green to the number of one hundred and thirty. The roll was duly called at this perilous midnight muster, and some answered to their names for the last time on earth. The company was now ordered to load with powder and ball, and awaited in anxious expectation the return of those who had been sent to reconnoitre the enemy. One of them, in consequence of some misinformation, returned and reported that there was no appearance of troops on the road from Boston. Under this harassing uncertainty and contradiction, the militia were dismissed, to await the return of the other expresses and with orders to be in readiness at the beat of the drum. One of these messengers was made pris-



oner by the British, whose march was so cautious, that they remained undiscovered till within a mile and a half of Lexington meetinghouse, and time was scarce left for the last messenger to return with the tidings of their approach.

The new alarm was now given ; the bell rings, alarm guns are fired, the drum beats to arms. Some of the militia had gone home, when dismissed ; but the greater part were in the neighbouring houses, and instantly obeyed the summons. Sixty or seventy appeared on the green and were drawn up in double ranks. At this moment the British column of eight hundred gleaming bayonets appears, headed by their mounted commanders, their banners flying and drums beating a charge. To engage them with a handful of militia of course was madness,—to fly at the sight of them, they disdained. The British troops rush furiously on ; their commanders, with mingled threats and execrations, bid the Americans lay down their arms and disperse, and their own troops to fire. A moment's delay, as of compunction, follows. The order with vehement imprecations is repeated, and they fire. No one falls, and the band of self-devoted heroes, most of whom had never seen such a body of troops before, stand firm in the front of an army, outnum-

bering them ten to one. Another volley succeeds ; the killed and wounded drop, and it was not till they had returned the fire of the overwhelming force, that the militia were driven from the field. A scattered fire now succeeded on both sides while the Americans remained in sight ; and the British troops were then drawn up on the green to fire a volley and give a shout in honor of the victory.\*

While these incidents were taking place, and every moment then came charged with events which were to give a character to centuries, Hancock and Adams, though removed by their friends from the immediate vicinity of the force sent to apprehend them, were apprized, too faithfully, that the work of death was begun. The heavy and quick repeated volleys told them a tale, that needed no exposition,—which proclaimed that Great Britain had renounced that strong invisible tie which bound the descendants of England to the land of their fathers, and had appealed to the right of the strongest. The inevitable train of consequences burst in prophetic fulness upon their minds ; and the patriot Adams, forgetting the scenes of tribulation through which America must pass to realize the pros-

\* See note C.

pect, and heedless that the ministers of vengeance, in overwhelming strength, were in close pursuit of his own life, uttered that memorable exclamation, than which nothing more generous, nothing more sublime can be found in the records of Grecian or Roman heroism,—“ O, what a glorious morning is this ! ”

Elated with its success, the British army took up its march toward Concord. The intelligence of the projected expedition had been communicated to this town by Dr Samuel Prescott, in the manner already described ; and from Concord had travelled onward in every direction. The interval was employed in removing a portion of the public stores to the neighbouring towns, while the aged and infirm, the women and children, sought refuge in the surrounding woods. About seven o'clock in the morning, the glittering arms of the British column were seen advancing on the Lincoln road. A body of militia from one hundred and fifty to two hundred men, who had taken post for observation on the heights above the entrance to the town, retire at the approach of the army of the enemy, first to the hill a little farther north, and then beyond the bridge. The British troops press forward into the town, and are drawn

up in front of the courthouse. Parties are then ordered out to the various spots where the public stores and arms were supposed to be deposited. Much had been removed to places of safety, and something was saved by the prompt and innocent artifices of individuals. The destruction of property and of arms was hasty and incomplete, and considered as the object of an enterprise of such fatal consequences, it stands in shocking contrast with the waste of blood by which it was effected.

I am relating events, which, though they can never be repeated more frequently than they deserve, are yet familiar to all who hear me. I need not therefore attempt, nor would it be practicable did I attempt it, to recall the numerous interesting occurrences of that ever memorable day. The reasonable limits of a public discourse must confine us to a selection of the more prominent incidents.

It was the first care of the British commander to cut off the approach of the Americans from the neighbouring towns, by destroying or occupying the bridges. A party was immediately sent to the south bridge and tore it up. A force of six companies, under Captains Parsons and Lowrie, was sent to the north bridge. Three companies under

Captain Lowrie were left to guard it, and three under Captain Parsons proceeded to Colonel Barrett's house, in search of provincial stores. While they were engaged on that errand, the militia of Concord, joined by their brave brethren from the neighbouring towns, gathered on the hill opposite the north bridge, under the command of Colonel Robinson and Major Buttrick. The British companies at the bridge were now apparently bewildered with the perils of their situation, and began to tear up the planks of the bridge; not remembering that this would expose their own party, then at Colonel Barrett's, to certain and entire destruction. The Americans, on the other hand, resolved to keep open the communication with the town, and perceiving the attempt which was made to destroy the bridge, were immediately put in motion, with orders not to give the first fire. They draw near to the bridge, the Acton company in front, led on by the gallant Davis. Three alarm guns were fired into the water, by the British, without arresting the march of our citizens. The signal for a general discharge is then made;—a British soldier steps from the ranks and fires at Major Buttrick. The ball passed between his arm and his side, and slightly wounded Mr Luther Blanchard, who stood

near him. A volley instantly followed, and Captain Davis was shot through the heart, gallantly marching at the head of the Acton militia against the choice troops of the British line. A private of his company, Mr Hosmer of Acton, also fell at his side. A general action now ensued, which terminated in the retreat of the British party, after the loss of several killed and wounded, toward the centre of the town, followed by the brave band who had driven them from their post. The advance party of British at Colonel Barrett's was thus left to its fate; and nothing would have been more easy than to effect its entire destruction. But the idea of a declared war had yet scarcely forced itself, with all its consequences, into the minds of our countrymen; and these advanced companies were allowed to return unmolested to the main band.

It was now twelve hours since the first alarm had been given, the evening before, of the meditated expedition. The swift watches of that eventful night had scattered the tidings far and wide; and widely as they spread, the people rose in their strength. The genius of America, on this the morning of her emancipation, had sounded her horn over the plains and upon the mountains; and the

indignant yeomanry of the land, armed with the weapons which had done service in their fathers' hands, poured to the spot where this new and strange tragedy was acting. The old New England drums, that had beat at Louisburgh, at Quebec, at Martinique, at the Havana, were now sounding on all the roads to Concord. There were officers in the British line, that knew the sound ;—they had heard it, in the deadly breach, beneath the black, deep-throated engines of the French and Spanish castles. With the British it was a question no longer of protracted hostility, nor even of halting long enough to rest their exhausted troops, after a weary night's march, and all the labor, confusion, and distress of the day's efforts. Their dead were hastily buried in the public square ; their wounded placed in the vehicles which the town afforded ; and a flight commenced, to which the annals of British warfare will hardly afford a parallel. On all the neighbouring hills were multitudes from the surrounding country, of the unarmed and infirm, of women and of children, who had fled from the terrors and the perils of the plunder and conflagration of their homes ; or were collected, with fearful curiosity, to mark the progress of this storm of war. The panic fears of a calamitous

flight, on the part of the British, transformed this inoffensive, timid throng into a threatening array of armed men; and there was too much reason for the misconception. Every height of ground, within reach of the line of march, was covered with the indignant avengers of their slaughtered brethren. The British light companies were sent out to great distances as flanking parties; but who was to flank the flankers? Every patch of trees, every rock, every stream of water, every building, every stone wall, was *lined* (I use the words of a British officer in the battle), was lined with an unintermitted fire. Every cross-road opened a new avenue to the assailants. Through one of these the gallant Brooks lead up the minute men of Reading. At another defile, they were encountered by the Lexington militia, under Captain Parker, who, undismayed at the loss of more than a tenth of their number in killed and wounded in the morning, had returned to the conflict. At first the contest was kept up by the British, with all the skill and valor of veteran troops. To a military eye it was not an unequal contest. The commander was not, or ought not to have been, taken by surprise. Eight hundred picked men, grenadiers and light infantry, from



the English army, were no doubt considered by General Gage a very ample detachment to march eighteen or twenty miles through an open country ; and a very fair match for all the resistance which could be made by unprepared husbandmen, without concert, discipline, or leaders. With about ten times their number, the Grecian commander had forced a march out of the wrecks of a field of battle and defeat, through the barbarous nations of Asia, for thirteen long months, from the plains of Babylon to the Black sea, through forests, defiles, and deserts, which the foot of civilized man had never trod. It was the American cause,—its holy foundation in truth and right, its strength and life in the hearts of the people, that converted what would naturally have been the undisturbed march of a strong, well provided army, into a rabble rout of terror and death. It was this, which sowed the fields of our pacific villages with dragon's teeth ; which nerved the arm of age ; called the ministers and servants of the church into the hot fire ; and even filled with strange passion and manly strength the heart and the arm of the strippling. A British historian, to paint the terrific aspect of things that presented itself to his countrymen, declares that the rebels swarmed upon the

hills, as if they dropped from the clouds. Before the flying troops had reached Lexington, their rout was entire. Some of the officers had been made prisoners, some had been killed, and several wounded, and among them the commander in chief, Colonel Smith. The ordinary means of preserving discipline failed; the wounded, in chaises and wagons, pressed to the front and obstructed the road; wherever the flanking parties, from the nature of the ground, were forced to come in, the line of march was crowded and broken; the ammunition began to fail; and at length the entire body was on a full run. "We attempted," says a British officer already quoted, "to stop the men and form them two deep, but to no purpose; the confusion rather increased than lessened." An English historian says, the British soldiers were driven before the Americans like sheep; till, by a last desperate effort, the officers succeeded in forcing their way to the front, "when they presented their swords and bayonets against the breasts of their own men, and told them if they advanced they should die." Upon this they began to form, under what the same British officer pronounces "a very heavy fire," which must soon have led to the destruction or capture of the whole corps. At this

critical moment, it pleased Providence that a reinforcement should arrive. Colonel Smith had sent back a messenger from Lexington to apprise General Gage of the check he had there received, and of the alarm which was running through the country. Three regiments of infantry and two divisions of marines with two fieldpieces, under the command of Brigadier General Lord Percy, were accordingly detached. They marched out of Boston, through Roxbury and Cambridge,\* and came up with the flying party, in the hour of their extreme peril. While their fieldpieces kept the Americans at bay, the reinforcement drew up in a hollow square, into which, says the British historian, they received the exhausted fugitives, "who lay down on the ground, with their tongues hanging from their mouths, like dogs after a chase."

A half an hour was given to rest; the march was then resumed; and under cover of the fieldpieces, every house in Lexington, and on the road downwards, was plundered and set on fire. Though the flames in most cases were speedily extinguished, several houses were destroyed. Notwithstanding the attention of a great part of the Americans was thus drawn off; and although the British force

\* See note D.

was now more than doubled, their retreat still wore the aspect of a flight. The Americans filled the heights that overhung the road, and at every defile, the struggle was sharp and bloody. At West Cambridge, the gallant Warren, never distant when danger was to be braved, appeared in the field, and a musket ball soon cut off a lock of hair from his temple. General Heath was with him, nor does there appear till this moment, to have been any effective command among the American forces.

Below West Cambridge, the militia from Dorchester, Roxbury, and Brookline came up. The British fieldpieces began to lose their terror. A sharp skirmish followed, and many fell on both sides. Indignation and outraged humanity struggled on the one hand, veteran discipline and desperation on the other; and the contest, in more than one instance, was man to man, and bayonet to bayonet.

The British officers had been compelled to descend from their horses to escape the certain destruction, which attended their exposed situation. The wounded, to the number of two hundred, now presented the most distressing and constantly increasing obstruction to the progress of the march.

Near one hundred brave men had fallen in this disastrous flight; a considerable number had been made prisoners; a round or two of ammunition only remained; and it was not till late in the evening, nearly twenty-four hours from the time when the first detachment was put in motion, that the exhausted remnant reached the heights of Charlestown. The boats of the vessels of war were immediately employed to transport the wounded; the remaining British troops in Boston came over to Charlestown to protect their weary countrymen during the night; and before the close of the next day the royal army was formally besieged in Boston.

Such, fellow citizens, imperfectly sketched in their outline, were the events of the day we celebrate; a day as important as any recorded in the history of man. Such were the first of a series of actions, that have extensively changed and are every day more extensively changing the condition and prospects of the human race. Such were the perils, such the sufferings of our fathers, which it has pleased Providence to crown with a blessing beyond the most sanguine hopes of those who then ventured their all in the cause.

*See Memorial*

It is a proud anniversary for our neighbourhood. We have cause for honest complacency, that when the distant citizen of our own republic, when the stranger from foreign lands, inquires for the spots where the noble blood of the revolution began to flow, where the first battle of that great and glorious contest was fought, he is guided through the villages of Middlesex, to the plains of Lexington and Concord. It is a commemoration of our soil, to which ages, as they pass, will add dignity and interest ; till the names of Lexington and Concord, in the annals of freedom, will stand by the side of the most honourable names in Roman or Grecian story.

It was one of those great days, one of those elemental occasions in the world's affairs, when the people rise, and act for themselves. Some organization and preparation had been made ; but, from the nature of the case, with scarce any effect on the events of that day. It may be doubted, whether there was an efficient order given the whole day to any body of men, as large as a regiment. It was the people, in their first capacity, as citizens and as freemen, starting from their beds at midnight, from their firesides, and from their fields, to take their own cause into their own

hands. Such a spectacle is the height of the moral sublime ; when the want of every thing is fully made up by the spirit of the cause ; and the soul within stands in place of discipline, organization, resources. In the prodigious efforts of a veteran army, beneath the dazzling splendor of their array, there is something revolting to the reflective mind. The ranks are filled with the desperate, the mercenary, the depraved ; an iron slavery, by the name of subordination, merges the free will of one hundred thousand men, in the unqualified despotism of one ; the humanity, mercy, and remorse, which scarce ever desert the individual bosom, are sounds without a meaning to that fearful, ravenous, irrational monster of prey, a mercenary army. It is hard to say who are most to be commiserated, the wretched people on whom it is let loose, or the still more wretched people whose substance has been sucked out, to nourish it into strength and fury. But in the efforts of the people, of the people struggling for their rights, moving not in organized, disciplined masses, but in their spontaneous action, man for man, and heart for heart,—though I like not war nor any of its works,—there is something glorious. They can then move forward without orders, act together without combi-

nation, and brave the flaming lines of battle, without entrenchments to cover, or walls to shield them. No dissolute camp has worn off from the feelings of the youthful soldier the freshness of that home, where his mother and his sisters sit waiting, with tearful eyes and aching hearts, to hear good news from the wars ; no long service in the ranks of a conqueror has turned the veteran's heart into marble ; their valor springs not from recklessness, from habit, from indifference to the preservation of a life, knit by no pledges to the life of others. But in the strength and spirit of the cause alone they act, they contend, they bleed. In this, they conquer. The people always conquer. They always must conquer. Armies may be defeated ; kings may be overthrown, and new dynasties imposed by foreign arms on an ignorant and slavish race, that care not in what language the covenant of their subjection runs, nor in whose name the deed of their barter and sale is made out. But the people never invade ; and when they rise against the invader, are never subdued. If they are driven from the plains, they fly to the mountains. Steep rocks and everlasting hills are their castles ; the tangled, pathless thicket their palisado, and nature,—God, is their ally.





Now he overwhelms the hosts of their enemies beneath his drifting mountains of sand ; now he buries them beneath a falling atmosphere of polar snows ; he lets loose his tempests on their fleets ; he puts a folly into their counsels, a madness into the hearts of their leaders ; and never gave and never will give a full and final triumph over a virtuous, gallant people, resolved to be free.

There is another reflection, which deserves to be made, while we dwell on the events of the nineteenth of April. It was the work of the country. The *cities* of America, particularly the metropolis of our own state, bore their part nobly in the revolutionary contest. It is not unjust to say, that much of the spirit which animated America, particularly before the great appeal to arms, grew out of the comparison of opinions and concert of feeling, which might not have existed, without the convenience of assembling which our large towns afford. But if we must look to the city for a part of the impulse, we must look to the country at large, for the heart to be moved,—for the strength and vigor to persevere in the motion. It was the great happiness of America, that her cities were no larger, no more numerous, no nearer to each other ; that the strength, the intelligence, the spirit of the

people were diffused over plains, and encamped on the hills.

In most of the old and powerful states of Europe, the nation is identified with the capital, and the capital with the court. France must fall with the citizens of Paris, and the citizens of Paris with a few courtiers, cabinet ministers, and princes. No doubt the English ministry thought that by holding Boston, they held New England; that the country was conquered in advance, by the military occupation of the great towns. They did not know that every town and village in America had discussed the great questions at issue for itself; and in its town-meetings, and committees of correspondence and safety, had come to the resolution, that America must not be taxed by England. The English government did not understand,—we hardly understood, ourselves, till we saw it in action,—the operation of a state of society, where every man is or may be a freeholder, a voter for every elective office, a candidate for every one; where the means of a good education are universally accessible; where the artificial distinctions of society are known but in a slight degree; where glaring contrasts of condition are rarely met with; where few are raised by the extreme of wealth above their

fellow-men, and fewer sunk by the extreme of poverty beneath it. The English ministry had not reasoned upon the natural growth of such a soil; that it could not permanently bear either a colonial, or a monarchical government; that the only true and native growth of such a soil was a perfect independence and an intelligent republicanism. Independence, because such a country must disdain to go over the water to find another to protect it; Republicanism, because the people of such a country must disdain to look up for protection to any one class among themselves. The entire action of these principles was unfolded to the world on the nineteenth of April, 1775. Without waiting to take an impulse from any thing but their own breasts, and in defiance of the whole exerted powers of the British empire, the yeomanry of the country rose as a man, and set their lives on this dear stake of liberty.

When we look back on the condition in which America stood on the 19th of April, 1775; and compare it with that in which it stands this day, we can find no language of gratitude with which to do justice to those, who took the lead in the revolutionary cause. The best gratitude, the best

thanks, will be an imitation of their example. It would be an exceedingly narrow view of the part assigned to this country on the stage of the nations, to consider the erection of an independent and representative government as the only political object at which the revolution aimed, and the only political improvement which our duty requires. These are two all-important steps, indeed, in the work of meliorating the state of society. The first gives the people of America the sovereign power of carrying its will into execution; the second furnishes an equitable and convenient mode of ascertaining what the will of the people is. But shall we stop here? shall we make no use of these two engines, by whose combined action every individual mind enjoys a share in the sovereign power of this great nation? Most of the civil and social institutions which still exist in the country, were brought by our fathers from the old world, and are strongly impressed with the character of the state of society which there prevails. Under the influence of necessity, these institutions have been partially reformed, and rendered, to a certain degree, harmonious with the nature of a popular government. But much remains to be done, to make the work of revolution complete.

✓ The whole business of public instruction, of the administration of justice, of military defence in time of peace, needs to be revolutionized ; that is, to be revised and made entirely conformable to the interests and wishes of the great mass. It is time, in short, to act upon the maxim in which the wisdom of all ages is wrapped up, THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE IS THE VOICE OF GOD. Apart from inspired revelation, there is no way, in which the will of heaven is made known, but by the sound, collective sense of the majority of men. It is given to no privileged family, to no hereditary ruler ; it is given to no commanding genius ; it is given to no learned sage ; it is given to no circle of men to pronounce this sacred voice. It must be uttered by the people, in their own capacity ; and whensoever it is uttered, I say not it ought to be, but that it will be obeyed. ✓

But it is time to relieve your patience. I need not labor to impress you with a sense of the duty, which devolves on those, whose sires achieved the ever memorable exploits of this day. The lesson, I know, has not been lost upon you. Nowhere have the spirit and principles of the revolution preserved themselves in greater purity ; nowhere have the institutions, to which the revolution led,

been more firmly cherished. The toils and sufferings of that day were shared by a glorious band of patriots, whose name was your boast while living ; whose memory you will never cease to cherish. The day we commemorate called the noble farmer of Middlesex—the heroic Prescott—to the field, and impelled him, not to accept, but to solicit the post of honor and danger, on the 17th of June :—noble I call him, for when did coronet or diadem ever confer distinction, like the glory which rests on that man's name. In the perils of this day, the venerable Gerry bore his part. This was the day, which called the lamented Brooks and Eustis to their country's service ; which enlisted them, blooming in the freshness and beauty of youth, in that sacred cause, to which the strength of their manhood and the grey hairs of their age were devoted. The soil which holds their honored dust shall never be unworthy of them.

What pride did you not justly feel in that soil, when you lately welcomed the nation's guest—the venerable champion of America—to the spot, where that first note of struggling freedom was uttered, which sounded across the ~~the~~ Atlantic, and drew him from all the delights of life, to enlist in our

cause. Here, you could tell him, our fathers fought and fell, before they knew whether another arm would be raised to second them.—No Washington had appeared to lead, no Lafayette had hastened to assist, no charter of independence had yet breathed the breath of life into the cause, when the 19th of April called our fathers to the field.

What remains, then, but to guard the precious birthright of our liberties; to draw from the soil which we inhabit, a consistency in the principles so nobly vindicated, so sacredly sealed thereon. It shall never be said, while distant regions, wheresoever the temples of freedom are reared, are sending back their hearts to the plains of Lexington and Concord, for their brightest and purest examples of patriotic daring, that we whose lives are cast on these favoured spots, can become indifferent to the exhortation, which breathes to us from every sod of the valley. Those principles, which others may adopt on the colder ground of their reason and their truth, we are bound to support by the dearest and deepest feelings. Wheresoever the torch of liberty shall expire, wheresoever the manly simplicity of our land shall perish beneath the poison of luxury, wheresoever the cause which called our fathers this day to arms, and the

principles which sustained their hearts in that stern encounter, may be deserted or betrayed,—it shall not, fellow citizens, it shall not be, on the soil which was moistened with their blood. The names of Marathon and Thermopylæ, after ages of subjection, still nerve the arm of the Grecian patriot; and should the foot of a tyrant, or of a slave, approach these venerated spots, the noble hearts that bled at Lexington and Concord, “all dust as they are,”\* would beat beneath the sod with indignation.

Honor, this day, to the venerable survivors of that momentous day, which tried men’s souls. Great is the happiness they are permitted to enjoy, in uniting, within the compass of their own experience, the doubtful struggles and the full blown prosperity of our happy land. May they share the welfare they witness around them; it is the work of their hands, the fruit of their toils, the price of their lives freely hazarded that their children might live free. Bravely they dared; patiently, aye more than patiently,—heroically, piously, they suffered; largely, richly, may they enjoy. Most of their companions are already departed;

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\* Bossuet; Oraison funèbre de la Reine d’ Angleterre.



let us renew our tribute of respect this day to their honored memory. Numbers present will recollect the affecting solemnities, with which you accompanied to his last home, the brave, the lamented Buttrick. With trailing banners, and mournful music, and all the touching ensigns of military sorrow, you followed the bier of the fallen soldier, over the ground where he led the determined band of patriots on the morn of the revolution.

But chiefly to those who fell ; to those who stood in the breach, at the breaking of that day of blood at Lexington ; to those who joined in battle and died honorably, facing the foe at Concord ; to those who fell in the gallant pursuit of the flying enemy ;—let us this day pay a tribute of grateful admiration. The old and the young ; the grey-haired veteran, the stripling in the flower of youth ; husbands, fathers, brethren, sons ;—they stood side by side, and fell together, like the beauty of Israel on their high places.

✓ We have founded this day a monument to their memory. When the hands that rear it are motionless, when the feeble voice is silent, which speaks our fathers' praise, the engraven stone shall bear witness to other ages, of our gratitude and their worth. And ages still farther on, when the mon-

ument itself, like those who build it, shall have crumbled to dust, the happy aspect of the land which our fathers redeemed, the liberty they achieved, the institutions they founded, shall remain one common, eternal monument to their precious memory.

## NOTES.

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*Note A, page 20.*

THAT the lanterns were observed in Charlestown, we are informed by Colonel Revere, in the interesting communication in the Collections of the Historical Society, from which this part of the narrative is chiefly taken. A tradition by private channels has descended, that these lanterns in the North Church were quickly noticed by the officers of the British army, on duty on the evening of the 18th. To prevent the alarm being communicated by these signals into the country, the British officers, who had noticed them, hastened to the church to extinguish them. Their steps were heard on the stairs in the tower of the church, by the sexton, who had lighted the lanterns. To escape discovery, he himself extinguished the lanterns, and passing by the officers on the stairs, concealed himself in the vaults of the church. He was, a day or two after, arrested, while discharging the duties of his office at a funeral, tried, and condemned to death; but respited on a threat of retaliation from Gen. Washington, and finally exchanged. This anecdote

was related to me, with many circumstances of particularity, by one who had often heard it from the sexton himself.

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*Note B, page 21.*

The manner in which Colonel Revere was received at Lexington, which is not related in his own letter, will appear from the following extract from the deposition of Colonel William Munroe, which, with several other similar interesting documents, forms a part of the Appendix to the pamphlet alluded to in the next note.

“About midnight, Colonel Paul Revere rode up and requested admittance. I told him the family had just retired, and requested they might not be disturbed by any noise about the house. ‘Noise!’ said he, ‘you ’ll have noise enough before long. The regulars are coming out.’ We then permitted him to pass.” p. 33.

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*Note C, page 30.*

It will be perceived, that, in drawing up the account of the transactions at Lexington, reference has been had to the testimony contained in the pamphlet lately published, entitled, “History of the Battle at Lexington, on the morning of the 19th of April, 1775. By Elias Phinney.” While in this pamphlet

several interesting facts are added, on the strength of the depositions of surviving actors in the scene, to the accounts previously existing; there is nothing, perhaps, in them, which may not be reconciled with those previously existing accounts, if due allowance be made for the sole object for which the latter were originally published—to show that the British were the aggressors;—for the hurry and confusion of the moment; and for the different aspect of the scene as witnessed by different persons, from different points of view. It has, however, been my aim not to pronounce on questions in controversy; but to state the impression left on my own mind after an attentive examination of all the evidence.

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*Note D, page 39.*

An interesting anecdote relative to this march of Lord Percy has been communicated to me by a veteran of the Revolution, who bore his part in the events of the day. Intelligence having been promptly received of Lord Percy's being detached, the Selectmen of Cambridge, by order of the Committee of Safety, caused the planks of the Old Bridge to be taken up. Had this been effectually done, it would have arrested the progress of Lord Percy. But the planks, though all taken up, instead of being thrown into the river or removed to a distance, were piled up on the causeway, at the Cambridge end of the bridge.

But little time was therefore lost by Lord Percy, in sending over men upon the string-pieces of the bridge, who replaced the planks, so as to admit the passage of the troops. This was, however, so hastily and insecurely done, that when a convoy of provision wagons, with a serjeant's guard, which had followed in the rear of the reinforcement, reached the bridge, the planks were found to be too loosely laid to admit a safe passage; and a good deal of time was consumed in adjusting them. The convoy at length passed; but after such a delay, that Lord Percy's army was out of sight. The officer who commanded the convoy was unacquainted with the roads, and was misdirected by the inhabitants at Cambridge. Having at last, after much lost time, been put into the right road, the body of troops under Lord Percy was so far advanced, as to afford the convoy no protection. A plan was accordingly laid and executed by the citizens of West Cambridge (then Menotomy) to arrest this convoy. The alarum-list, or body of exempts, under Captain Frost, by whom this exploit was effected, acted under the direction of a negro, who had served in the French war; and who, on this occasion, displayed the utmost skill and spirit. The history of Gordon, and the other accounts which follow him, attribute the capture of the convoy to the Rev. Dr Payson of Chelsea. Those who have farther information alone can judge between the two accounts. The Rev. Mr Thaxter, of Edgartown, in a letter lately published in the United States Literary Gazette, has ascribed the same exploit to the Rev. Edward Brooks of Medford. Mr Brooks early hastened to the

field as a volunteer that day ; and is said to have preserved the life of Lieut. Gould of the 18th regiment, who was made prisoner at Concord Bridge ; but there is, I believe, no ground for ascribing to him the conduct of the affair in question.





AN

# ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE LAYING OF THE

## Corner Stone

OF THE

BUNKER HILL MONUMENT.

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*BY DANIEL WEBSTER.*



BOSTON :

PUBLISHED BY CUMMINGS, HILLIARD, AND COMPANY.

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1825.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO WIT:

*District Clerk's Office.*

BE it remembered, that on the twenty-first day of June, A. D. 1825, in the forty-ninth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Cummings, Hilliard, & Co. of said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, to wit:—

“An Address delivered at the Laying of the Corner Stone of the Bunker Hill Monument. By Daniel Webster.”

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;” and also to an Act, entitled, “An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, ‘An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;’ and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.”

JNO. W. DAVIS,

*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

## ADDRESS.

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THIS uncounted multitude before me, and around me, proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces, glowing with sympathy and joy, ~~(and, from the impulses of a common gratitude, turned reverently to heaven, in this spacious temple of the firmament)~~ proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts.

If, indeed, ~~there be any thing in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here.~~ We are among the sepulchres of our fathers. We are on ground, distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor to draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had

never been conceived, if we ourselves had never been born, the 17th of June 1775 would <sup>NOT</sup> have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand, a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. But we are Americans. We live in what may be called the early age of this great continent; and we know that our posterity, through all time, are here to suffer and enjoy the allotments of humanity. We see before us a probable train of great events; we know that our own fortunes have been happily cast; and it is natural, therefore, that we should be moved by the contemplation of occurrences which have guided our destiny before many of us were born, and settled the condition in which we should pass that portion of our existence, which God allows to men on earth.)

We do not read even of the discovery of this continent, without feeling something of a personal interest in the event; without being reminded how much it has affected our own fortunes, and our own existence. It is more impossible for us, therefore, than for others, to contemplate with unaffected minds that interesting, I may say, that most touching and pathetic scene, when the

great Discoverer of America stood on the deck of his shattered bark, the shades of night falling on the sea, yet no man sleeping; tossed on the billows of an unknown ocean, yet the stronger billows of alternate hope and despair tossing his own troubled thoughts; extending forward his harassed frame, straining westward his anxious and eager eyes, till Heaven at last granted him a moment of rapture and ecstasy, in blessing his vision with the sight of the unknown world.

Nearer to our times, more closely connected with our fates, and therefore still more interesting to our feelings and affections, is the settlement of our own country by colonists from England. We cherish every memorial of these worthy ancestors; we celebrate their patience and fortitude; we admire their daring enterprise; we teach our children to venerate their piety; and we are justly proud of being descended from men, who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions on the great and united principles of human freedom and human knowledge. ~~To us, their children, the story of their labors and sufferings can never be without its interest. We shall not stand unmoved on the shore of Plymouth, while the sea continues to wash it; nor will our~~

brethren in another early and ancient colony, forget the place of its first establishment, till their river shall cease to flow by it. No vigor of youth, no maturity of manhood, will lead the nation to forget the spots where its infancy was cradled and defended.

But the great event, in the history of the continent, which we are now met here to commemorate ; that prodigy of modern times, at once the wonder and the blessing of the world, is the American Revolution. In a day of (extraordinary) prosperity and happiness, of high national honor, distinction, and power, we are brought together, in this place, by our love of country, by our admiration of exalted character, by our gratitude for signal services and patriotic devotion.

The society, whose organ I am, was formed for the purpose of rearing some honorable and durable monument to the memory of the early friends of American Independence. They have thought, (~~that for this object no time could be more propitious, than the present prosperous and peaceful period~~) that no place could claim preference over this memorable spot ; and that no day could be more auspicious to the undertaking, than

the anniversary of the battle which was here fought. The foundation of that monument we have now laid. With solemnities suited to the occasion, with prayers to Almighty God for his blessing, and in the midst of this cloud of witnesses, we have begun the work. We trust it will be prosecuted; and that springing from a broad foundation, rising high in massive solidity and unadorned grandeur, it may remain, (as long as Heaven permits the works of man to last) a fit emblem, both of the events in memory of which it is raised, and of the gratitude of those who have reared it.

We know, (indeed,) that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know, that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that, which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know, that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself, can carry information of the events we commemorate, where it has not already gone; and that no structure,

which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men, can prolong the memorial. But our object is, (by this edifice) to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors ; and, by presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the Revolution. Human beings are composed not of reason only, but of imagination also, and sentiment ; and that is neither wasted nor misapplied which is appropriated to the purpose of giving right direction to sentiments, and opening proper springs of feeling in the heart. \ Let it not be supposed that our object is to perpetuate national hostility, or even to cherish a mere military spirit. It is higher, purer, nobler. We consecrate our work to the spirit of national independence, and we wish that the light of peace may rest upon it forever. We rear a memorial of our conviction of that unmeasured benefit, which has been conferred on our own land, and of the happy influences, which have been produced, by the same events, on the general interests of mankind. We come, as Americans, to mark a spot, which must forever be dear to us and our posterity. We wish, that whosoever, in



all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished, where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. We wish, that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and importance of that event, to every class and every age. We wish, that infancy may learn the purpose of its erection from maternal lips, and that weary and withered age may behold it, and be solaced by the recollections which it suggests. We wish, that labor may look up here, and be proud, in the midst of its toil. We wish, that, in those days of disaster, which, as they come on all nations, must be expected to come on us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eyes hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power still stand strong. We wish, that this column, rising towards heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object on the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden his who revisits it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. Let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the

morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.

We live in a most extraordinary age. Events so various and so important, that they might crowd and distinguish centuries, are, in our times, compressed within the compass of a single life. When has it happened that history has had so much to record, in the same term of years, as since the 17th of June 1775? Our own Revolution, which, under other circumstances, might itself have been expected to occasion a war of half a century, has been achieved; twenty-four sovereign and independent states erected; and a general government established over them, so safe, so wise, so free, so practical, that we might well wonder its establishment should have been accomplished so soon, were it not far the greater wonder that it should have been established at all. Two or three millions of people have been augmented to twelve; and the great forests of the West prostrated beneath the arm of successful industry; and the dwellers on the banks of the Ohio and the Mississippi, become the fellow citizens and neighbours of those who cultivate the hills of New England. We have a commerce, that leaves no

sea unexplored ; navies, which take no law from superior force ; revenues, adequate to all the exigencies of government, almost without taxation ; and peace with all nations, founded on equal rights and mutual respect.

Europe, within the same period, has been agitated by a mighty revolution, which, while it has been felt in the individual condition and happiness of almost every man, has shaken to the centre her political fabric, and dashed against one another thrones, which had stood tranquil for ages. On this, our continent, our own example has been followed ; and colonies have sprung up to be nations. Unaccustomed sounds of liberty and free government have reached us from beyond the track of the sun ; and at this moment the dominion of European power, in this continent, from the place where we stand to the south pole, is annihilated forever.

In the mean time, both in Europe and America, such has been the general progress of knowledge ; such the improvements in legislation, in commerce, in the arts, in letters, and above all in liberal ideas, and the general spirit of the age, that the whole world seems changed.

Yet, notwithstanding that this is but a faint abstract of the things which have happened since the day of the battle of Bunker Hill, we are but fifty years removed from it; and we now stand here, to enjoy all the blessings of our own condition, and to look abroad on the brightened prospects of the world, while we hold still among us some of those, who were active agents in the scenes of 1775, and who are now here, from every quarter of New England, to visit, once more, and under circumstances so affecting, I had almost said so overwhelming, this renowned theatre of their courage and patriotism.

VENERABLE MEN! you have come down to us, from a former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives, that you might behold this joyous day. You are now, where you stood, fifty years ago, this very hour, with your brothers, and your neighbours, shoulder to shoulder, in the strife for your country. Behold, how altered! The same heavens are indeed over your heads; the same ocean rolls at your feet; but all else, how changed! You hear now no roar of hostile cannon, you see no mixed volumes of smoke and flame rising from burning Charles-

town. The ground strewed with the dead and the dying; the impetuous charge; the steady and successful repulse; the loud call to repeated assault; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death;—all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more. All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs, which you then saw filled with wives and children and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of its whole happy population, come out to welcome and greet you with an universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country's own means of distinction and defence. All is peace; and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness, ere you slumber in the grave forever. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils; and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here, and in the

name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you!

But, alas! you are not all here! Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Read, Pomeroy, Bridge! our eyes seek for you in vain amidst this broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your country in her grateful remembrance, and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve, that you have met the common fate of men. You lived, at least, long enough to know that your work had been nobly and successfully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established, and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of Peace, like

‘another morn,

Risen on mid-noon;’—

and the sky, on which you closed your eyes, was cloudless.

But—ah!—Him! the first great Martyr in this great cause! Him! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart! Him! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands; whom nothing brought hither, but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit; Him!

cut off by Providence, in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom ; falling, ere he saw the star of his country rise ; pouring out his generous blood, like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage ! how shall I struggle with the emotions, that stifle the utterance of thy name ! — Our poor work may perish ; but thine shall endure ! This monument may moulder away ; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea ; but thy memory shall not fail ! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found, that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit !

But the scene amidst which we stand does not permit us to confine our thoughts or our sympathies to those fearless spirits, who hazarded or lost their lives on this consecrated spot. We have the happiness to rejoice here in the presence of a most worthy representation of the survivors of the whole Revolutionary Army.

VETERANS ! you are the remnant of many a well fought field. You bring with you marks of honor from Trenton and Monmouth, from York-

town, Camden, Bennington, and Saratoga. VET-  
ERANS OF HALF A CENTURY ! when in your youth-  
ful days, you put every thing at hazard in your  
country's cause, good as that cause was, and san-  
guine as youth is, still your fondest hopes did not  
stretch onward to an hour like this ! At a  
period to which you could not reasonably have  
expected to arrive ; at a moment of national  
prosperity, such as you could never have foreseen,  
you are now met, here, to enjoy the fellowship of  
old soldiers, and to receive the overflowings of an  
universal gratitude.

But your agitated countenances and your heav-  
ing breasts inform me that even this is not an un-  
mixed joy. I perceive that a tumult of contend-  
ing feelings rushes upon you. The images of the  
dead, as well as the persons of the living, throng  
to your embraces. The scene overwhelms you,  
and I turn from it. May the Father of all mer-  
cies smile upon your declining years, and bless  
them ! And when you shall here have exchanged  
your embraces ; when you shall once more have  
pressed the hands which have been so often extend-  
ed to give succour in adversity, or grasped in the  
exultation of victory ; then look abroad into this  
lovely land, which your young valor defended, and



mark the happiness with which it is filled ; yea, look abroad into the whole earth, and see what a name you have contributed to give to your country, and what a praise you have added to freedom, and then rejoice in the sympathy and gratitude, which beam upon your last days from the improved condition of mankind.

The occasion does not require of me any particular account of the battle of the 17th of June, nor any detailed narrative of the events which immediately preceded it. These are familiarly known to all. In the progress of the great and interesting controversy, Massachusetts and the town of Boston had become early and marked objects of the displeasure of the British Parliament. This had been manifested, in the Act for altering the Government of the Province, and in that for shutting up the Port of Boston. Nothing sheds more honor on our early history, and nothing better shows how little the feelings and sentiments of the colonies were known or regarded in England, than the impression which these measures every where produced in America. It had been anticipated, that while the other colonies would be terrified by the severity of the punishment inflicted on

Massachusetts, the other seaports would be governed by a mere spirit of gain ; and that, as Boston was now cut off from all commerce, the unexpected advantage, which this blow on her was calculated to confer on other towns, would be greedily enjoyed. How miserably such reasoners deceived themselves ! How little they knew of the depth, and the strength, and the intensity of that feeling of resistance to illegal acts of power, which possessed the whole American people ! Every where the unworthy boon was rejected with scorn. The fortunate occasion was seized, every where, to show to the whole world, that the colonies were swayed by no local interest, no partial interest, no selfish interest. The temptation to profit by the punishment of Boston was strongest to our neighbours of Salem. Yet Salem was precisely the place, where this miserable proffer was spurned, in a tone of the most lofty self-respect, and the most indignant patriotism. ‘ We are deeply affected,’ said its inhabitants, ‘ with the sense of our public calamities ; but the miseries that are now rapidly hastening on our brethren in the capital of the Province, greatly excite our commiseration. By shutting up the port of Boston, some imagine that the course of

trade might be turned hither and to our benefit ; but we must be dead to every idea of justice, lost to all feelings of humanity, could we indulge a thought to seize on wealth, and raise our fortunes on the ruin of our suffering neighbours.' These noble sentiments were not confined to our immediate vicinity. In that day of general affection and brotherhood, the blow given to Boston smote on every patriotic heart, from one end of the country to the other. Virginia and the Carolinas, as well as Connecticut and New Hampshire, felt and proclaimed the cause to be their own. The Continental Congress, then holding its first session in Philadelphia, expressed its sympathy for the suffering inhabitants of Boston, and addresses were received from all quarters, assuring them that the cause was a common one, and should be met by common efforts and common sacrifices. The Congress of Massachusetts responded to these assurances ; and in an address to the Congress at Philadelphia, bearing the official signature, perhaps among the last, of the immortal Warren, notwithstanding the severity of its suffering and the magnitude of the dangers which threatened it, it was declared, that this colony 'is ready, at all times, to spend and to be spent in the cause of America.'

But the hour drew nigh, which was to put professions to the proof, and to determine whether the authors of these mutual pledges were ready to seal them in blood. The tidings of Lexington and Concord had no sooner spread, than it was universally felt, that the time was at last come for action. A spirit pervaded all ranks, not transient, not boisterous, but deep, solemn, determined,

‘totamque infusa per artus

‘Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.’

War, on their own soil and at their own doors, was, indeed, a strange work to the yeomanry of New England; but their consciences were convinced of its necessity, their country called them to it, and they did not withhold themselves from the perilous trial. The ordinary occupations of life were abandoned; the plough was staid in the unfinished furrow; wives gave up their husbands, and mothers gave up their sons, to the battles of a civil war. Death might come, in honor, on the field; it might come, in disgrace, on the scaffold. For either and for both they were prepared. The sentiment of Quincy was full in their hearts. ‘Blandishments,’ said that distinguished son of genius and patriotism, ‘will not fascinate us, nor

will threats of a halter intimidate ; for, under God, we are determined, that wheresoever, whensoever, or howsoever we shall be called to make our exit, we will die free men.'

The 17th of June saw the four New England colonies standing here, side by side, to triumph or to fall together ; and there was with them from that moment to the end of the war, what I hope will remain with them forever, one cause, one country, one heart.

The battle of Bunker Hill was attended with the most important effects beyond its immediate result as a military engagement. [It created at once a state of open, public war.] There could now be no longer a question of proceeding against individuals, as guilty of treason or rebellion. That fearful crisis was past. The appeal now lay to the sword, and the only question was, whether the spirit and the resources of the people would hold out, till the object should be accomplished. Nor were its general consequences confined to our own country. The previous proceedings of the colonies, their appeals, resolutions, and addresses, had made their cause known to Europe. Without boasting, we may say, that in no age or country, has the public cause been maintained with more

force of argument, more power of illustration, or more of that persuasion which excited feeling and elevated principle can alone bestow, than the revolutionary state papers exhibit. These papers will forever deserve to be studied, not only for the spirit which they breathe, but for the ability with which they were written.

To this able vindication of their cause, the colonies had now added a practical and severe proof of their own true devotion to it, and evidence also of the power which they could bring to its support. All now saw, that if America fell, she would not fall without a struggle. Men felt sympathy and regard, as well as surprise, when they beheld these infant states, remote, unknown, unaided, encounter the power of England, and in the first considerable battle, leave more of their enemies dead on the field, in proportion to the number of combatants, than they had recently known in the wars of Europe.

Information of these events, circulating through Europe, at length reached the ears of one who now hears me. He has not forgotten the emotion, which the fame of Bunker Hill, and the name of Warren, excited in his youthful breast.

SIR, we are assembled to commemorate the establishment of great public principles of liberty, and to do honor to the distinguished dead. The occasion is too severe for eulogy to the living. But, sir, your interesting relation to this country, the peculiar circumstances which surround you and surround us, call on me to express the happiness which we derive from your presence and aid in this solemn commemoration.

Fortunate, fortunate man ! with what measure of devotion will you not thank God, for the circumstances of your extraordinary life ! You are connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain, that the electric spark of Liberty should be conducted, through you, from the new world to the old ; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us long ago received it in charge from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. You will account it an instance of your good fortune, sir, that you crossed the seas to visit us at a time which enables you to be present at this solemnity. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of France, and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. You see the lines of the little redoubt thrown up

by the incredible diligence of Prescott; defended, to the last extremity, by his lion-hearted valor; and within which the corner stone of our monument has now taken its position. You see where Warren fell, and where Parker, Gardner, McCleary, Moore, and other early patriots fell with him. Those who survived that day, and whose lives have been prolonged to the present hour, are now around you. Some of them you have known in the trying scenes of the war. Behold! they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you. Behold! they raise their trembling voices to invoke the blessing of God on you, and yours, forever.

Sir, you have assisted us in laying the foundation of this edifice. You have heard us rehearse, with our feeble commendation, the names of departed patriots. Sir, monuments and eulogy belong to the dead. We give them, this day, to Warren and his associates. On other occasions they have been given to your more immediate companions in arms, to Washington, to Greene, to Gates, Sullivan, and Lincoln. Sir, we have become reluctant to grant these, our highest and last honors, further. We would gladly hold them yet back from the little remnant of that immortal band. *Serus in cælum redeas.* Illus-



trious as are your merits, yet far, oh, very far distant be the day, when any inscription shall bear your name, or any tongue pronounce its eulogy!

The leading reflection, to which this occasion seems to invite us, respects the great changes which have happened in the fifty years, since the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. And it peculiarly marks the character of the present age, that, in looking at these changes, and in estimating their effect on our condition, we are obliged to consider, not what has been done in our own country only, but in others also. In these interesting times, while nations are making separate and individual advances in improvement, they make, too, a common progress; like vessels on a common tide, propelled by the gales at different rates, according to their several structure and management, but all moved forward by one mighty current beneath, strong enough to bear onward whatever does not sink beneath it.

A chief distinction of the present day is a community of opinions and knowledge amongst men, in different nations, existing in a degree heretofore unknown. Knowledge has, in our time, tri-

umphed, and is triumphing, over distance, over difference of languages, over diversity of habits, over prejudice, and over bigotry. The civilized and Christian world is fast learning the great lesson, that difference of nation does not imply necessary hostility, and that all contact need not be war. The whole world is becoming a common field for intellect to act in. Energy of mind, genius, power, wheresoever it exists, may speak out in any tongue, and the *world* will hear it. A great chord of sentiment and feeling runs through two continents, and vibrates over both. Every breeze wafts intelligence from country to country; every wave rolls it; all give it forth, and all in turn receive it. There is a vast commerce of ideas; there are marts and exchanges for intellectual discoveries, and a wonderful fellowship of those individual intelligences which make up the mind and opinion of the age. Mind is the great lever of all things; human thought is the process by which human ends are ultimately answered; and the diffusion of knowledge, so astonishing in the last half century, has rendered innumerable minds, variously gifted by nature, competent to be competitors, or fellow-workers, on the theatre of intellectual operation.

From these causes, important improvements have taken place in the personal condition of individuals. Generally speaking, mankind are not only better fed, and better clothed, but they are able also to enjoy more leisure ; they possess more refinement and more self-respect. A superior tone of education, manners, and habits prevails. This remark, most true in its application to our own country, is also partly true, when applied elsewhere. It is proved by the vastly augmented consumption of those articles of manufacture and of commerce, which contribute to the comforts and the decencies of life ; an augmentation which has far outrun the progress of population. And while the unexampled and almost incredible use of machinery would seem to supply the place of labor, labor still finds its occupation and its reward ; so wisely has Providence adjusted men's wants and desires to their condition and their capacity.

Any adequate survey, however, of the progress made in the last half century, in the polite and the mechanic arts, in machinery and manufactures, in commerce and agriculture, in letters and in science, would require volumes. I must abstain wholly from these subjects, and turn, for a moment, to the con-

templation of what has been done on the great question of politics and government. This is the master topic of the age ; and during the whole fifty years, it has intensely occupied the thoughts of men. The nature of civil government, its ends and uses, have been canvassed and investigated ; ancient opinions attacked and defended ; new ideas recommended and resisted, by whatever power the mind of man could bring to the controversy. From the closet and the public halls the debate has been transferred to the field ; and the world has been shaken by wars of unexampled magnitude, and the greatest variety of fortune. A day of peace has at length succeeded ; and now that the strife has subsided, and the smoke cleared away, we may begin to see what has actually been done, permanently changing the state and condition of human society. And without dwelling on particular circumstances, it is most apparent, that, from the beforementioned causes of augmented knowledge and improved individual condition, a real, substantial, and important change has taken place, and is taking place, greatly beneficial, on the whole, to human liberty and human happiness.

The great wheel of political revolution began to move in America. Here its rotation was guard-

ed, regular, and safe. Transferred to the other continent, from unfortunate but natural causes, it received an irregular and violent impulse ; it whirled along with a fearful celerity ; till at length, like the chariot wheels in the races of antiquity, it took fire from the rapidity of its own motion, and blazed onward, spreading conflagration and terror around.

We learn from the result of this experiment, how fortunate was our own condition, and how admirably the character of our people was calculated for making the great example of popular governments. The possession of power did not turn the heads of the American people, for they had long been in the habit of exercising a great portion of self-control. Although the paramount authority of the parent state existed over them, yet a large field of legislation had always been open to our colonial assemblies. They were accustomed to representative bodies and the forms of free government ; they understood the doctrine of the division of power among different branches, and the necessity of checks on each. The character of our countrymen, moreover, was sober, moral, and religious ; and there was little in the change to shock their feelings of justice and hu-

manity, or even to disturb an honest prejudice. We had no domestic throne to overturn, no privileged orders to cast down, no violent changes of property to encounter. In the American Revolution, no man sought or wished for more than to defend and enjoy his own. None hoped for plunder or for spoil. Rapacity was unknown to it; the axe was not among the instruments of its accomplishment; and we all know that it could not have lived a single day under any well founded imputation of possessing a tendency adverse to the Christian religion.

It need not surprise us, that, under circumstances less auspicious, political revolutions elsewhere, even when well intended, have terminated differently. It is, indeed, a great achievement, it is the master work of the world, to establish governments entirely popular, on lasting foundations; nor is it easy, indeed, to introduce the popular principle at all, into governments to which it has been altogether a stranger. It cannot be doubted, however, that Europe has come out of the contest, in which she has been so long engaged, with greatly superior knowledge, and, in many respects, a highly improved condition. Whatever benefit has been acquired, is likely to

be retained, for it consists mainly in the acquisition of more enlightened ideas. And although kingdoms and provinces may be wrested from the hands that hold them, in the same manner they were obtained ; although ordinary and vulgar power may, in human affairs, be lost as it has been won ; yet it is the glorious prerogative of the empire of knowledge, that what it gains it never loses. On the contrary, it increases by the multiple of its own power ; all its ends become means ; all its attainments, helps to new conquests. Its whole abundant harvest is but so much seed wheat, and nothing has ascertained, and nothing can ascertain, the amount of ultimate product.

Under the influence of this rapidly increasing knowledge, the people have begun, in all forms of government, to think, and to reason, on affairs of state. Regarding government as an institution for the public good, they demand a knowledge of its operations, and a participation in its exercise. A call for the Representative system, wherever it is not enjoyed, and where there is already intelligence enough to estimate its value, is perseveringly made. Where men may speak out, they demand it ; where the bayonet is at their throats, they pray for it.

When Louis XIV. said, "I am the state," he expressed the essence of the doctrine of unlimited power. By the rules of that system, the people are disconnected from the state; they are its subjects; it is their lord. These ideas, founded in the love of power, and long supported by the excess and the abuse of it, are yielding, in our age, to other opinions; and the civilized world seems at last to be proceeding to the conviction of that fundamental and manifest truth, that the powers of government are but a trust, and that they cannot be lawfully exercised but for the good of the community. As knowledge is more and more extended, this conviction becomes more and more general. Knowledge, in truth, is the great sun in the firmament. Life and power are scattered with all its beams. The prayer of the Grecian combatant, when enveloped in unnatural clouds and darkness, is the appropriate political supplication for the people of every country not yet blessed with free institutions;

'Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore,  
Give me TO SEE — and Ajax asks no more.'

(We may hope, that the growing influence of enlightened sentiments will promote the permanent peace of the world.) Wars, to maintain family



alliances, to uphold or to cast down dynasties, to regulate successions to thrones, which have occupied so much room in the history of modern times, if not less likely to happen at all, will be less likely to become general and involve many nations, as the great principle shall be more and more established, that the interest of the world is peace, and its first great statute, that every nation possesses the power of establishing a government for itself. But public opinion has attained also an influence over governments, which do not admit the popular principle into their organization. A necessary respect for the judgment of the world operates, in some measure, as a control over the most unlimited forms of authority. It is owing, perhaps, to this truth, that the interesting struggle of the Greeks has been suffered to go on so long, without a direct interference, either to wrest that country from its present masters, and add it to other powers, or to execute the system of pacification by force, and, with united strength, lay the neck of christian and civilized Greece at the foot of the barbarian Turk. Let us thank God that we live in an age, when something has influence besides the bayonet, and when the sternest authority does not venture to encounter the scorching

power of public reproach. Any attempt of the kind I have mentioned, should be met by one universal burst of indignation ; the air of the civilized world ought to be made too warm to be comfortably breathed by any who would hazard it.

It is, indeed, a touching reflection, that while, in the fulness of our country's happiness, we rear this monument to her honor, we look for instruction, in our undertaking, to a country which is now in fearful contest, not for works of art or memorials of glory, but for her own existence. Let her be assured, that she is not forgotten in the world ; that her efforts are applauded, and that constant prayers ascend for her success. And let us cherish a confident hope for her final triumph. If the true spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn. Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire it may be smothered for a time ; the ocean may overwhelm it ; mountains may press it down ; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or another, in some place or another, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven.

Among the great events of the half century, we must reckon, certainly, the Revolution of South America ; and we are not likely to overrate the importance of that Revolution, either to the people of the country itself or to the rest of the world. The late Spanish colonies, now independent states, under circumstances less favorable, doubtless, than attended our own Revolution, have yet successfully commenced their national existence. They have accomplished the great object of establishing their independence ; they are known and acknowledged in the world ; and although in regard to their systems of government, their sentiments on religious toleration, and their provisions for public instruction, they may have yet much to learn, it must be admitted that they have risen to the condition of settled and established states, more rapidly than could have been reasonably anticipated. They already furnish an exhilarating example of the difference between free governments and despotic misrule. Their commerce, at this moment, creates a new activity in all the great marts of the world. They show themselves able, by an exchange of commodities, to bear an useful part in the intercourse of nations.

A new spirit of enterprise and industry begins to prevail ; all the great interests of society receive a salutary impulse ; and the progress of information not only testifies to an improved condition, but constitutes, itself, the highest and most essential improvement.

When the battle of Bunker Hill was fought, the existence of South America was scarcely felt in the civilized world. The thirteen little colonies of North America habitually called themselves the ' Continent.' Borne down by colonial subjugation, monopoly, and bigotry, these vast regions of the South were hardly visible above the horizon. But in our day there hath been, as it were, a new creation. The Southern Hemisphere emerges from the sea. Its lofty mountains begin to lift themselves into the light of heaven ; its broad and fertile plains stretch out, in beauty, to the eye of civilized man, and at the mighty bidding of the voice of political liberty the waters of darkness retire.

And, now, let us indulge an honest exultation in the conviction of the benefit, which the example of our country has produced, and is likely

to produce, on human freedom and human happiness. And let us endeavour to comprehend, in all its magnitude, and to feel, in all its importance, the part assigned to us in the great drama of human affairs. We are placed at the head of the system of representative and popular governments. Thus far our example shows, that such governments are compatible, not only with respectability and power, but with repose, with peace, with security of personal rights, with good laws, and a just administration.

We are not propagandists. Wherever other systems are preferred, either as being thought better in themselves, or as better suited to existing condition, we leave the preference to be enjoyed. Our history hitherto proves, however, that the popular form is practicable, and that with wisdom and knowledge men may govern themselves; and the duty incumbent on us is, to preserve the consistency of this cheering example, and take care that nothing may weaken its authority with the world. If, in our case, the Representative system ultimately fail, popular governments must be pronounced impossible. No combination of circumstances more favorable to the experiment can

ever be expected to occur. The last hopes of mankind, therefore, rest with us ; and if it should be proclaimed, that our example had become an argument against the experiment, the knell of popular liberty would be sounded throughout the earth.

These are excitements to duty ; but they are not suggestions of doubt. Our history and our condition, all that is gone before us, and all that surrounds us, authorize the belief, that popular governments, though subject to occasional variations, perhaps not always for the better, in form, may yet, in their general character, be as durable and permanent as other systems. We know, indeed, that, in our country, any other is impossible. The *Principle* of Free Governments adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it ; immovable as its mountains.

And let the sacred obligations which have devolved on this generation, and on us, sink deep into our hearts. Those are daily dropping from among us, who established our liberty and our government. The great trust now descends to new hands. Let us apply ourselves to that which is presented to us, as our appropriate object. We

can win no laurels in a war for Independence. Earlier and worthier hands have gathered them all. Nor are there places for us by the side of Solon, and Alfred, and other founders of states. Our fathers have filled them. But there remains to us a great duty of defence and preservation; and there is opened to us, also, a noble pursuit, to which the spirit of the times strongly invites us. Our proper business is improvement. Let our age be the age of improvement. In a day of peace, let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. In pursuing the great objects, which our condition points out to us, let us act under a settled conviction, and an habitual feeling, that these twenty-four states are one country. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field in which we are called to act. Let our object be, **OUR COUNTRY, OUR WHOLE COUNTRY,**

AND NOTHING BUT OUR COUNTRY. And, by the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid Monument, not of oppression and terror, but of Wisdom, of Peace, and of Liberty, upon which the world may gaze, with admiration, forever!

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# OUTLINES

OF

THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS IN THE LIFE

OF

# GENERAL LAFAYETTE.

FROM THE

NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

By  
George Ticknor



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The following notice of the Life of General Lafayette was originally printed in the forty sixth number of the North American Review. It is now reprinted with a few alterations and a considerable number of additions.

## OUTLINES.



THE family of General Lafayette has long been distinguished in the history of France. As early as 1422, the Marshal de Lafayette defeated and killed the Duke of Clarence at Beaugé, and thus saved his country from falling entirely into the power of Henry Fifth, of England. Another of his ancestors, though not in the direct line, Madame de Lafayette, the intimate friend and correspondent of Madame de Sevigné, and one of the most brilliant ornaments of the court of Louis Fourteenth, was the first person who ever wrote a romance, relying for its success on domestic character, and thus became the founder of the most popular department in modern literature. His father fell in the battle of Münden, and therefore survived the birth of his son only two years. These, with many more memorials of his family,

scattered through the different portions of French history for nearly five centuries, are titles to distinction, which it is particularly pleasant to recollect when they fall, as they now do, on one so singularly fitted to receive and increase them.

General Lafayette himself was born in Auvergne, in the south of France, on the 6th of September, 1757. When quite young, he was sent to the College of Du Plessis at Paris, where he received that classical education, of which, when recently at Cambridge, he twice gave remarkable proof in uncommonly happy quotations from Cicero, suited to circumstances that could not have been foreseen. Somewhat later, he was sent to Versailles, where the court constantly resided; and there his education was still further continued, and he was made, in common with most of the young noblemen, an officer in the army. When only between sixteen and seventeen, he was married to the daughter of the Duke d'Ayen, son of the Duke de Noailles, and grandson to the great and good Chancellor d'Aguesseau; and thus his condition in life seemed to be assured to him among the most splendid and powerful in the empire. His fortune, which had been accumulating during a long minority, was vast; his rank was with the first in Europe; his connexions brought him the support of the chief persons in France;

and his individual character, the warm, open, and sincere manners, which have distinguished him ever since, and given him such singular control over the minds of men, made him powerful in the confidence of society wherever he went. It seemed, indeed, as if life had nothing further to offer him, than he could surely obtain by walking in the path that was so bright before him.

It was at this period, however, that his thoughts and feelings were first turned towards these thirteen colonies, then in the darkest and most doubtful passage of their struggle for independence. He made himself acquainted with our agents at Paris, and learned from them the state of our affairs. Nothing could be less tempting to him, whether he sought military reputation or military instruction, for our army, at that moment retreating through New Jersey, and leaving its traces in blood from the naked and torn feet of the soldiery as it hastened onward, was in a state too humble to offer either. Our credit, too, in Europe was entirely gone, so that the commissioners, as they were called, without having any commission, to whom Lafayette still persisted in offering his services, were obliged, at last, to acknowledge that they could not even give him decent means for his conveyance. "Then," said he, "I shall purchase and fit out a vessel for myself." He did so. The vessel was

prepared at Bordeaux, and sent round to one of the nearest ports in Spain, that it might be beyond the reach of the French government. In order more effectually to conceal his purposes, he made, just before his embarkation, a visit of a few weeks in England, the only time he was ever there, and was much sought in English society. On his return to France, he did not stop at all in the capital, even to see his own family, but hastened with all speed and secrecy, to make good his escape from the country. It was not until he was thus on his way to embark, that his romantic undertaking began to be known.

The effect produced in the capital and at court by its publication, was greater than we should now, perhaps, imagine. Lord Stormont, the English Ambassador, required the French ministry to despatch an order for his arrest not only to Bordeaux, but to the French commanders on the West India station; a requisition with which the ministry readily complied, for they were, at that time, anxious to preserve a good understanding with England, and were seriously angry with a young man, who had thus put in jeopardy the relations of the two countries. In fact, at Passage, on the very borders of France and Spain, a *lettre de cachet* overtook him, and he was arrested and carried back to Bordeaux. There, of course, his

enterprise was near being finally stopped ; but watching his opportunity, and assisted by one or two friends, he disguised himself as a courier, with his face blacked and false hair, and rode on ordering post-horses, for a carriage which he had caused to follow him at a suitable distance for this very purpose, and thus fairly passed the frontiers of the two kingdoms, only three or four hours before his pursuers reached them. He soon arrived at his port, where his vessel was waiting for him. His family, however, still followed him with solicitations to return, which he never received ; and the society of the court and capital, according to Madame du Deffand's account of it, was in no common state of excitement on the occasion.\* Something

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\* De tous les départs présents, celui qui est le plus singulier et le plus étonnant, c'est celui de M. de Lafayette. Il n'a pas vingt ans ; il est parti ces jours-çi pour l'Amérique ; il emmène avec lui huit ou dix de ses amis ; il n'avait confié son projet qu' au Vicomte de Noailles, sous le plus grand secret ; il a acheté un vaisseau, l'a équipé, et s' est embarqué à Bordeaux. Sitôt que ses parents en ont eu la nouvelle, ils ont fait courir après lui pour l' arrêter et le ramener ; mais on est arrivé trop tard, il y avait trois heures qu' il était embarqué. C'est une folie, sans doute, mais qui ne le déshonore point, et qui au contraire marque du courage et du désir de la gloire. On le loue plus qu' on le blame ; mais sa femme, qu' il laisse grosse de quatre mois, son beau-père, sa belle-mère, et toute sa famille en sont fort affligés. *Lettre de Mad. du Deffand à H. Walpole, 31 Mars, 1777.*

of the same sort happened in London. "We talk chiefly," says Gibbon in a letter dated April 12, 1777, "of the Marquis de Lafayette, who was here a few weeks ago. He is about twenty; with a hundred and thirty thousand livres a year, the nephew of Noailles, who is ambassador here. He has bought the Duke of Kingston's yacht, [a mistake] and is gone to join the Americans. The court appear to be angry with him."

Immediately on arriving the second time at Passage, the wind being fair, he embarked. The usual course for French vessels attempting to trade with our colonies at that period, was, to sail for the West Indies, and then coming up along our coast, enter where they could. But this course would have exposed Lafayette to the naval commanders of his own nation, and he had almost as much reason to dread them, as to dread British cruisers. When, therefore, they were outside of the Canary Islands, Lafayette required his captain to lay their course directly for the United States. The captain refused, alleging, that if they should be taken by a British force and carried into Halifax, the French government would never reclaim them, and they could hope for nothing but a slow death in a dungeon or a prison-ship. This was true, but Lafayette knew it before he made the requisition. He, therefore, insisted un-



til the captain refused in the most positive manner. Lafayette then told him that the ship was his own private property, that he had made his own arrangements concerning it, and that if he, the captain, would not sail directly for the United States, he should be put in irons, and his command given to the next officer. The captain, of course, submitted, and Lafayette gave him a bond for forty thousand francs, in case of any accident. They, therefore, now made sail directly for the southern portion of the United States, and arrived unmolested at Charleston, S. C. on the 25th of April, 1777.

The sensation produced by his appearance in this country was, of course, much greater than that produced in Europe by his departure. It still stands forth, as one of the most prominent and important circumstances in our revolutionary contest; and, as has often been said by one who bore no small part in its trials and success, none but those who were then alive, can believe what an impulse it gave to the hopes of a population almost disheartened by a long series of disasters. And well it might; for it taught us, that in the first rank of the first nobility in Europe, men could still be found, who not only took an interest in our struggle, but were willing to share our sufferings; that our obscure and almost desperate contest for freedom in a

remote quarter of the world, could yet find supporters among those, who were the most natural and powerful allies of a splendid despotism ; that we were the objects of a regard and interest throughout the world, which would add to our own resources sufficient strength to carry us safely through to final success.

Immediately after his arrival, Lafayette received the offer of a command in our army, but declined it. Indeed, during the whole of his service with us, he seemed desirous to show, by his conduct, that he had come only to render disinterested assistance to our cause. He began, therefore, by clothing and equipping a body of men at Charleston at his own expense ; and then entered, as a volunteer, without pay, into our service. He lived in the family of the Commander in Chief, and won his full affection and confidence. He was appointed a Major General in our service, by a vote of Congress, on the 31st of July, 1777, and in September of the same year, was wounded at Brandywine. He was employed in 1778 in many parts of the country, as a Major General, and as the Head of a separate Division, and after having received the thanks of Congress for his important services, embarked at Boston in January, 1779, for France, thinking he could assist us more effectually, for a time, in Europe than in America.

He arrived at Versailles, then the regular residence of the French court, on the 12th of February, and the same day had a long conference with Maurepas, the Prime Minister. He was not permitted to see the king; and in a letter written at court the next day, we are told, that he received an order to visit none but his relations, as a form of censure for having left France without permission; but this was an order that fell very lightly on him, for he was connected by birth or marriage with almost every body at court, and every body else thronged to see him at his own hotel. The treaty, which was concluded between America and France at just about the same period, was, by Lafayette's personal exertions, made effective in our favor. He labored unremittingly to induce his Government to send us a fleet and troops; and it was not until he had gained this point, and ascertained that he should be speedily followed by Count Rochambeau, that he embarked to return. He reached the Head Quarters of the Army on the 11th of May 1780, and there confidentially communicated the important intelligence to the Commander in Chief.

Immediately on his return from his furlough, he resumed his place in our service with the same disinterested zeal he had shown on his first arrival. He received the separate command of a body of infantry, consisting of about two thousand men, and

clothed and equipped it partly at his own expense, rendering it by unwearied exertions, constant sacrifices, and wise discipline, the best corps in the army. What he did for us, while at the head of this division, is known to all, who have read the history of their country. His forced march to Virginia, in December 1780, raising two thousand guineas at Baltimore, on his own credit, to supply the pressing wants of his troops ; his rescue of Richmond, which but for his great exertions must have fallen into the enemy's hands ; his long trial of generalship with Cornwallis, who foolishly boasted in an intercepted letter, that "the boy could not escape him ;" and finally the siege of Yorktown, the storming of the redoubt, and the surrender of the place in October, 1781, are proofs of talent as a military commander, and devotion to the welfare of these states, for which he never has been repaid, and, in some respects, never can be.

He was, however, desirous to make yet greater exertions in our favour, and announced his project of revisiting France for the purpose. Congress had already repeatedly acknowledged his merits and services in formal votes. They now acknowledged them more formally than ever by a resolution of November 23d, in which, besides all other expressions of approbation, they desire the foreign ministers of this government to confer with him in

their negotiations concerning our affairs ; a mark of respect and deference, of which we know no other example.

In France a brilliant reputation had preceded him. The cause of America was already popular there ; and his exertions and sacrifices in it, which, from the first, had seemed so chivalrous and romantic, now came reflected back upon him in the strong light of popular enthusiasm. While he was in the United States for the first time, Voltaire made his remarkable visit to Paris, and having met Madame de Lafayette at the Hotel de Choiseuil, he made her a long harangue on the brilliant destinies that awaited her husband as a defender of the great cause of popular freedom ; and ended by offering his homage to her on his knees.

Before his return too, the following beautiful verses, from the Gaston et Bayard of Belloy, had been often applauded and their repetition sometimes called for, on the public theatre, and Madame Campan tells us, that she for a long time preserved them in the handwriting of the unfortunate Queen of Louis Sixteenth, who had transcribed them because they had thus been publicly appropriated to the popular favorite of the time.

Eh ! que fait sa jeunesse

Lorsque de l'âge mûr je lui vois la sagesse ?

Profond dans ses desseins, qu'il trace avec froideur,

C'est pour les accomplir, qu'il garde son ardeur.

Il sait défendre un camp et forcer des murailles,  
 Comme un jeune soldat désirant les batailles ;  
 Comme un vieux général il sait les éviter.  
 Je me plais à le suivre et même à l'imiter.  
 J'admire sa prudence et j'aime son courage.  
 Avec ces deux vertus un guerrier n'a point d'âge.

Act. I. Sc. 4. \*

It is not remarkable, therefore, with such a state of feeling while he was still absent from the country, that, on his return, he was followed by crowds in the public streets wherever he went ; and that in a journey he made to one of his estates in the south of France, the towns through which he passed received him with processions and civic honors ; and that in the city of Orleans he

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\* A similar circumstance happened, or rather in this second instance was prepared, at about the same time by Rochon de Chabannes, who introduced the following portrait of him into his *Amour François*, acted in 1780.

On est compté pour rien, quand on est inutile ;  
 L'oïveté, monsieur, est une mort civile....  
 Voyez ce courtisan à peu près de votre âge ;  
 Il renonce aux douceurs d'un récent mariage,  
 Aux charmes de la cour, aux plaisirs de Paris,  
 La gloire seule échauffe, embrase ses esprits,  
 Il vole la chercher sur un autre hémisphère, etc.

The resemblance was, of course, immediately recognized, and the name of Lafayette, which at first was murmured doubtfully, was, at the conclusion, shouted throughout the theatre in a tumult of applause.

was detained nearly a week by the festivities they had prepared for him.

He did not, however, forget our interests amidst the popular admiration with which he was surrounded. On the contrary, though the negotiations for a peace were advancing, he was constantly urging upon the French government the policy of sending more troops to this country, as the surest means of bringing the war to a speedy and favorable termination. He at last succeeded; and Count d'Estaing was ordered to hold himself in readiness to sail for the United States, as soon as Lafayette should join him. When, therefore, he arrived at Cadiz, he found forty-nine ships and twenty thousand men ready to follow him, first for the conquest\* of Jamaica, and then for our assistance; and they would have been on our coast early in the spring, if peace had not rendered further exertions unnecessary. This great event was first announced to Congress, by a letter from Lafayette, dated in the harbor of Cadiz, Feb. 5, 1783.

As soon as tranquillity was restored, Lafayette

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\* When Count d'Estaing was one day in conference with Charles III. of Spain, on the arrangements for this expedition, the Count suggested to his Majesty the propriety of leaving Lafayette for a time as Governor of Jamaica, in the event of its subjugation; "God forbid!" said the king, alarmed, "he would immediately make a republic of it."

began to receive pressing invitations to visit the country, whose cause he had so materially assisted. Washington, in particular, was extremely urgent; and yielding not only to these instances, but to an attachment to the United States, of which his whole life has given proof, he embarked again for our shores and landed at New York on the 4th of August 1784. His visit however was short. He went almost immediately to Mount Vernon, where he passed a few days in the family of which he was so long a cherished member, and then visiting Annapolis, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Albany, and Boston, received every where with unmingled enthusiasm and delight, he reembarked for France. But when he was thus about to leave the United States for the third, and, as it then seemed, the last time, Congress in December 1784 appointed a solemn deputation, consisting for its greater dignity, of one member from each state, with instructions to take leave of him on behalf of the whole country, and to assure him, "that these United States regard him with particular affection, and will not cease to feel an interest in whatever may concern his honor and prosperity, and that their best and kindest wishes will always attend him." It was at the same time resolved, that a letter be written to his Most Christian Majesty, expressive of the high sense, which the United



States in Congress assembled entertain of the zeal, talents, and meritorious services of the Marquis de Lafayette, and recommending him to the favor and patronage of his Majesty. We are not aware, that a more complete expression of dignified and respectful homage could have been offered to him.

During the year that followed the arrival of Lafayette in his own country, he found the minds of men more agitated on questions of political right, than they had ever been before. He went, for a short time, in 1785, to Prussia, for the purpose of seeing the troops of Frederick Second, and was received with distinguished kindness and consideration by that remarkable monarch ; at whose court, by a singular coincidence of circumstances, he frequently met with Lord Cornwallis, and several other of the officers who had fought against him in the campaign that ended at Yorktown. But the grave and perilous discussions, that were then going on in France, soon called him back from Prussia. Into some of those discussions, he entered at once ; on others he waited ; but, on all, his opinions were openly and freely known, and on all, he preserved the most perfect consistency. He was for some time ineffectually employed with Malesherbes, the Minister of Louis Sixteenth, in endeavoring to relieve the Protestants of France from political disabilities, and place them on the

same footing with other subjects. He was the first Frenchman, who raised his voice against the slave trade ; and it is worth notice, that having devoted considerable sums of money to purchase slaves in one of the colonies, and educate them for emancipation, the faction, which in 1792 proscribed him, as an enemy to freedom, sold these very slaves back to their original servitude. And finally, at about the same time, he attempted with our minister, Mr Jefferson, to form a league of some of the European Powers against the Barbaresque Pirates, which, if it had succeeded, would have done more for their suppression, than has been done by Sir Sidney Smith's Association, or is likely to follow Lord Exmouth's victories.

But while he was busied in the interests, to which these discussions gave rise, the materials for great internal changes were collecting together at Paris from all parts of France ; and in February 1787, the Assembly of the Notables was opened. Lafayette was, of course, a member, and the tone he held throughout its session contributed essentially to give a marked character to its deliberations. He proposed the suppression of the odious *lettres de cachet*, of which Mirabeau declared in the National Assembly, that seventeen had been issued against him before he was thirty years old ; he proposed the enfranchisement of the protestants,

who, from the time of the abolition of the Edict of Nantz, had been suffering under more degrading disabilities than the Catholics now are in Ireland ; and he proposed by a formal *motion*,—which was the first time that word was ever used in France, and marks an important step towards a regular deliberative assembly,—he made a *motion* for the convocation of Representatives of the people. “What,” said the Count d’Artois, now Charles Tenth, who presided in the assembly of the Notables, “do you ask for the States General?” “Yes,” replied Lafayette, “and for something more and better ;” an intimation, which, though it can be readily understood by all who have lived under a representative government, was hardly intelligible in France at that time.\*

Lafayette was, also, a prominent member of the States General, which met in 1789, and assumed the name of the National Assembly. He proposed in this body a Declaration of Rights not unlike our own, and it was under his influence and while he was, for this very purpose, in the chair, that a decree was passed on the night of the 13th

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\* No one rose to second this motion ; and yet, only two years afterwards, the States General were convoked in obedience to the unanimous call of the nation ; so clearly had Lafayette foreseen, what was foreseen by nobody else.

and 14th of July, at the moment the Bastille was falling before the cannon of the populace, which provided for the responsibility of ministers, and thus furnished one of the most important elements of a representative monarchy. Two days afterwards, he was appointed Commander in Chief of the National Guards of Paris, and thus was placed at the head of what was intended to be made, when it should be carried into all the departments, the effective military power of the realm, and what, under his wise management, soon become such.

His great military command, and his still greater personal influence, now brought him constantly in contact with the court and the throne. His position, therefore, was extremely delicate and difficult, especially as the popular party in Paris, of which he was not so much the head, as the idol, was already in a state of perilous excitement, and atrocious violences were beginning to be committed. The abhorrence of the queen was almost universal, and was excessive to a degree of which we can now have no just idea. The circumstance that the court lived at Versailles, sixteen miles from Paris, and that the session of the National Assembly was held there, was another source of jealousy, irritation, and hatred, on the part of the capital. The people of Paris, therefore, as a sign of opposition, had mounted their municipal cockade of blue and

red, whose effects were already becoming alarming. Lafayette, who was anxious about the consequences of such a marked division, and who knew how important are small means of conciliation, added to it, on the 26th of July, the white of the Royal cockade, and as he placed it in his own hat, amidst the acclamations of the multitude, prophesied, that it “ would go round the world ;” a prediction, which is already more than half accomplished, since the tricolored cockade has been used for the ensign of emancipation in Spain, in Naples, in some parts of South America, and in Greece.

Still, however, the tendency of everything was to confusion and violence. The troubles of the times, too, rather than a positive want of the means of subsistence, had brought on a famine in the capital ; and the populace of the Fauxbourgs, the most degraded certainly in France, having assembled and armed themselves, determined to go to Versailles ; the greater part with a blind desire for vengeance on the royal family, but others only with the purpose of bringing the king from Versailles, and forcing him to reside in the more ancient but scarcely habitable palace of the Thuilleries, in the midst of Paris. The National Guards clamored to accompany this savage multitude ; Lafayette opposed their inclination ; the municipality of Paris hesitated, but supported it ; he resisted near-

ly the whole of the 5th of October, while the road to Versailles was already thronged with an exasperated mob of above an hundred thousand ferocious men and women, until, at last, finding the multitude were armed and even had cannon, he asked and received an order to march, from the competent authority, and set off at four o'clock in the afternoon, as one going to a post of imminent danger, which it had clearly become his duty to occupy.

He arrived at Versailles at ten o'clock at night, after having been on horseback from before daylight in the morning, and having made, during the whole interval, both at Paris and on the road, incredible exertions to control the multitude and calm the soldiers. "The Marquis de Lafayette at last entered the Château," says Madame de Staël, "and passing through the apartment where we were, went to the king. We all pressed round him, as if he were the master of events, and yet the popular party was already more powerful than its chief, and principles were yielding to factions, or rather were beginning to serve only as their pretext. M. de Lafayette's manner was perfectly calm; nobody ever saw it otherwise; but his delicacy suffered from the importance of the part he was called to act. He asked for the interior posts of the château, in order that he might ensure

their safety. Only the outer posts were granted to him." This refusal was not disrespectful to him who made the request. It was given, simply because the etiquette of the court reserved the guard of the royal person and family to another body of men. Lafayette, therefore, answered for the National Guards, and for the posts committed to them ; but he could answer for no more ;\* and his pledge was faithfully and desperately redeemed.

Between two and three o'clock, the queen and the royal family went to bed. Lafayette, too, slept after the great fatigues of this fearful day. At half past four, a portion of the populace made their way into the palace by an obscure, interior passage, which had been overlooked, and which was not in that part of the château entrusted to Lafayette. They were evidently led by persons who well knew the secret avenues. Mirabeau's name was afterwards strangely compromised in it, and the form of the infamous Duke of Orleans was repeatedly recognised on the great staircase, pointing the assassins the way to the queen's chamber.

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\* So completely were all persons unsuspecting of any *immediate* danger, that the guards of the *interior* posts were nowhere increased ; and not the slightest change was made in the customary arrangements, except what was made at the solicitation of Lafayette.

They easily found it. Two of her guards were cut down in an instant; and she made her escape almost naked. Lafayette immediately rushed in with the national troops, protected the guards from the brutal populace, and saved the lives of the royal family, which had so nearly been sacrificed to the etiquette of the monarchy.

The day dawned as this fearful scene of guilt and bloodshed was passing in the magnificent palace, whose construction had exhausted the revenues of Louis Fourteenth, and which, for a century, had been the most splendid residence in Europe. As soon as it was light, the same furious multitude filled the vast space, which, from the rich materials of which it is formed, passes under the name of the court of marble. They called upon the king, in tones not to be mistaken, to go to Paris; and they called for the queen, who had but just escaped from their daggers, to come out upon the balcony. The king, after a short consultation with his ministers, announced his intention to set out for the capital; but Lafayette was afraid to trust the queen in the midst of the bloodthirsty multitude. He went to her, therefore, with respectful hesitation, and asked her if it were her purpose to accompany the king to Paris. "Yes," she replied, "although I am aware of the danger." "Are you positively determined?" "Yes, sir." "Conde-



scend, then, to go out upon the balcony, and suffer me to attend you.” “Without the king?”—she replied, hesitating—“Have you observed the threats?” “Yes, Madam, I have; but dare to trust me.” He led her out upon the balcony. It was a moment of great responsibility and great delicacy; but nothing, he felt assured, could be so dangerous as to permit her to set out for Paris, surrounded by that multitude, unless its feelings could be changed. The agitation, the tumult, the cries of the crowd, rendered it impossible that his voice should be heard. It was necessary, therefore, to address himself to the eye, and turning towards the queen, with that admirable presence of mind, which never yet forsook him, and with that mingled grace and dignity, which were the peculiar inheritance of the ancient court of France, he simply kissed her hand before the vast multitude. An instant of silent astonishment followed, but the whole was immediately interpreted, and the air was rent with cries of “Long live the queen!” “Long live the general!” from the same fickle and cruel populace, that only two hours before had embued their hands in the blood of the guards, who defended the life of this same queen.

The same day, that this scene was passing, the first meeting of the Jacobin club was held. Against this club and its projects Lafayette at once

declared himself. With Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, he organized an opposing club, and the victory between the two parties was doubtful for above a year and a half. The contest, however, which was produced by this state of things, placed Lafayette in a very embarrassing and dangerous position. He was obliged to oppose the unprincipled purposes of the Jacobins, without retreating towards the principles of the ancient despotism ; and it is greatly to his honor, that he did it most faithfully and consistently. When therefore, on the 20th of June, 1790, a proposition was suddenly made in the Assembly to abolish all titles of nobility, Lafayette, true to his principles, rose to second it. A short discussion followed. It was objected to the abolition of rank, that, if there were no titles, no such reward could be conferred as was once conferred by Henry Second, when he created an obscure person, according to the terms of his patent, “noble and count, for having saved the country at such a time.” “The only difference,” replied Lafayette, “will be, that the words, noble and count will be left out, and the patent will simply declare, that on such an occasion, such a man saved the state.” From this time Lafayette renounced the title of Marquis, and has never since resumed it. Since the restoration of the Bourbons indeed, and the revival of the ancient nobility,

there has been sometimes an affectation among the Ultra Royalists of calling him by his former title ; but he has never recognised it, and is still known in France only by the address of General. At least, if he is sometimes called otherwise there, it is not by his friends.

At length the Constitution of a representative Monarchy, much more popular than that of Great Britain, which Lafayette's exertions had, from the first opening of the Assembly, been consistently devoted to establish, was prepared ; and all were desirous that it should be received and recognised by the nation in the most solemn manner. The day chosen, as most appropriate for the ceremony, was the 14th of July, 1790, the anniversary of the destruction of the Bastille ; and the open space behind the military school, called the Champ de Mars, from the Campus Martius of the Romans, was the place fixed on for this great national festival and solemnity. By the constant labor of above two hundred thousand persons of both sexes and all ranks, from dukes and duchesses, bishops and deputies, down to the humblest artisans, who all made the occasion like the Saturnalia of the ancients, an amphitheatre of earth four miles in circumference was raised in a few weeks, whose sides were formed of seats destined to receive the French people, and amidst which stood the Throne and the Altar.

On the morning of the day when the whole was to be consummated, the king, the court, the clergy, the National Assembly, a deputation of the military from the eighty-three departments, and a body of people amounting to above four hundred thousand souls were assembled in this magnificent amphitheatre. Mass was first said, and then Lafayette, who that day had the military command of four millions of men, represented by 14,000 elected military deputies, and who held in his hands the power of the monarchy, swore to the Constitution on behalf of the nation, at the altar which had been erected in the midst of the arena. Every eye of that immense mass was turned on him ; every hand was raised to join the oath he uttered. It was, no doubt, one of the most magnificent and solemn ceremonies the world ever saw ; and, perhaps, no man ever enjoyed the sincere confidence of an entire people more completely than Lafayette did, as he thus bore the most imposing part in these extraordinary solemnities.

The Champ de Mars, however, as Madame de Staël has well observed, was the last movement of a genuine national enthusiasm in France. The Jacobins were constantly gaining power, and the revolution was falling more and more into the hands of the populace. When the king wished to go to St Cloud with his family, in order to pass through the

duties of Easter, under the ministration of a priest, who had not taken certain civil oaths, which in the eyes of many conscientious Catholics desecrated those who received them, the populace and the national guards tumultuously stopped his carriage. Lafayette arrived, at the first suggestion of danger. "If," said he, "this be a matter of conscience with your majesty, we will, if it is necessary, die to maintain it;" and he offered immediately to open a passage by force; but the king hesitated at first, and finally determined to remain in Paris.

Lafayette, indeed, under all circumstances, remained strictly faithful to his oaths; and now defended the freedom of the king, as sincerely as he had ever defended the freedom of the people. His situation, therefore, became every day more dangerous. He might have taken great power to himself, and so have been safe. He might have received the sword of Constable of France, which was worn by the Montmorencies, but he declined it; or he might have been Generalissimo of the National Guards, who owed their existence to him; but he thought it more for the safety of the state that no such power should exist. Having, therefore, organized this last body, according to the project he had originally formed for it, he resigned all command at the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, with a disinterestedness of which, per-

haps, Washington alone could have been his example ; and retired to his estate in the country, followed, as he had been for many years, by crowds wherever he went, and accompanied on his way by every form of popular enthusiasm and admiration.

From the tranquillity to which he now gladly turned, he was soon called by the war with Austria, declared April 20th, 1792, and in which he was, at once, appointed one of the three Generals to command the French armies. His labors, in the beginning of this war, whose declaration he did not approve, were very severe ; and the obstacles he surmounted, some of which were purposely thrown in his way by the factions of the capital, were grave and alarming. But the Jacobins at Paris were now a well organized body, and were fast maturing their arrangements to overturn the Constitution. Violences of almost every degree of atrocity were become common, and that public order of which Lafayette had never ceased to speak on all suitable occasions, no longer existed.\* Un-

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\* It is a singular fact, that in all Lafayette's speeches and addresses between 1787 and 1792, he hardly once mentions *Freedom*, without coupling it with some intimation or injunction to respect and support *Public Order*. Since that time, the two phrases have been generally united ; but they have not always meant as much as they did when used by Lafayette.

der these circumstances, he felt that his silence would be an abandonment of the principles to the support of which he had devoted his life ; and with a courage, which few men in any age have been able to show, and with a temperance, which has always kept his conduct on one even line, he wrote a letter to the National Assembly, dated June 16th, in which he plainly denounced the growing faction of Jacobins, and called on the constituted authorities to put a stop to the atrocities this faction was openly promoting. In the course of this letter he dared to say ; “ Let the royal authority be untouched, for it is guarantied by the constitution ; let it be independent, for its independence is one of the springs of our liberty ; let the king be respected, for he is invested with the majesty of the nation ; let him choose a ministry that shall wear the chains of no faction ; and if traitors exist, let them perish only under the sword of the law.” There was not another man in France, who would have dared to take such a step, at such a time ; and it required all Lafayette’s vast influence to warrant him in expressing such opinions and feelings, or to protect him afterwards.

At first the Jacobins seemed to shrink from a contest with him. He had said to the assembly, “ Let the reign of clubs, abolished by you, give place to the reign of the law,” and they almost

doubted whether he had not yet power enough to effect what he counselled. They began, therefore, as soon as the letter had been read, by denying its authenticity ; they declared it, in short, to be a forgery. As soon as Lafayette heard of this, he came to Paris, and avowed it at the bar of the Assembly. The 20th of June, however, had overthrown the Constitution before his arrival ; and, though he stood with an air of calm command amidst its ruins, and vindicated it as proudly as ever, he was, after all, surrounded by those who had triumphed over it. Still the majority of the Assembly was decidedly with him, and when on the 8th of August, his impeachment was moved, more than two thirds voted in his favor. But things were daily growing worse. On the 9th of August, the Assembly declared itself no longer <sup>free</sup> ; and within two days, its number fell to less than one third, and the capital was given up to the terrors of the 10th of August. Lafayette, therefore, could do nothing at Paris, and returned to his army on the borders of the low countries. But the army, too, was now infected. He endeavoured to assure himself of its fidelity, and proposed to the soldiers to swear anew to the Constitution. A very large proportion refused, and it immediately became apparent, from the movements, both at Paris and in the army, that he was no longer safe. His adver-



saries, who for his letter, were determined and interested to ruin him, were his judges ; and they belonged to a party, which was never known to devote a victim without consummating the sacrifice. On the 17th of August, therefore, accompanied by three of his general officers, Alexandre Lameth, Latour Maubourg, and Bureaux de Puzy, he left the army, and in a few hours was beyond the limits of France. His general purpose was, to reach the neutral territory of the republic of Holland, which was quite near ; and from that point either rally the old constitutional party, or pass to Switzerland or the United States, where he should be joined by his family. That he did not leave France, while any hope remained for him, is certain ; since, before his escape was known at Paris, a decree, accusing him of high treason, which was then equivalent<sup>w</sup> to an order for his execution, was carried in what remained of the Assembly by a large majority.

Lafayette and his companions hoped to avoid the enemy's posts, but they did not succeed. They were seized the same night by an Austrian patrol, and soon afterwards recognised. They were not treated as prisoners of war, which was the only quality in which they could have been arrested and detained ; but were exposed to disgraceful indignities, because they had been the friends of the Con-

stitution. After being detained a short time by the Austrians, they were given up to the Prussians, who, because their fortresses were nearer, were supposed to be able to receive and guard them more conveniently. At first, they were confined at Wesel on the Rhine, and afterwards in dungeons at Magdeburg. But the Prussians, at last, became unwilling to bear the odium of such unlawful and disgraceful treatment of prisoners of war, entitled to every degree of respect from their rank and character; and especially from the manner in which they had been taken. They, therefore, before they made peace, gave them up again to the Austrians, who finally transferred them to most unhealthy dungeons in the citadel of Olmütz. The sufferings to which Lafayette was here exposed, in the mere spirit of a barbarous revenge, are almost incredible. He was warned, "that he would never again see any thing but the four walls of his dungeon; that he would never receive news of events or persons; that his name would be unknown in the citadel, and that in all accounts of him sent to court, he would be designated only by a number; that he would never receive any notice of his family, or of the existence of his fellow prisoners." At the same time, knives and forks were removed from him, as he was officially in-

formed, that his situation was one which would naturally lead him to suicide.\*

His sufferings, indeed, proved almost beyond his strength. The want of air, and the loathsome dampness and filth of his dungeon, brought him more than once to the borders of the grave. His frame was wasted with diseases, of which, for a long period, not the slightest notice was taken; and on one occasion, he was reduced so low, that his hair fell from him entirely by the excess of his sufferings. At the same time, his estates in France were confiscated, his wife cast into prison, and *Fayetteisme*, as adherence to the Constitution was called, was punished with death.

His friends, however, all over Europe, were carefully watching every opportunity to obtain some intelligence which should, at least, render his existence certain. Among those who made the most vigorous and continued exertions to get some hint of his fate, was Count Lally Tolendal, then a

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\* One principal reason of the vindictive spirit of the Austrian Government towards Lafayette is, no doubt, to be sought in the circumstance, that, as the leader of the early part of the French Revolution, he brought on those events, which led to the overthrow of the Monarchy, and the death of the Queen, who was an Austrian. Lafayette was released by Prussia, at the entreaty of his family, after the transfer of the three other prisoners to Austria.

refugee from his blood stained country. This nobleman became acquainted in London with Dr Erick Bollmann, a Hanoverian, who, immediately after the massacres of August 10th, 1792, had been employed by Madame de Staël to effect the escape of Count Narbonne, and, by great address and courage, had succeeded in conveying him safely to England. Dr Bollmann's adventurous spirit easily led him to engage in the affairs of Lafayette. His first expedition to the continent, under the direction of Lafayette's friends in London, in 1793, was, however, no further successful, than that he learned the determination of the Prussian government to give up Lafayette to Austria, and the probability that he had been already transferred. Where he was, and whether he were even alive, were circumstances Dr Bollmann found it impossible to determine.

But the friends of Lafayette were not discouraged. In June 1794, they again sent Dr Bollmann to Germany to ascertain what had been his fate, and if he were still alive, to endeavor to procure his escape. With great difficulty, he traced the French prisoners to the Prussian frontiers, and there ascertained, that an Austrian escort had received them, and taken the road to Olmütz, a strong fortress in Moravia, one hundred and fifty miles north of Vienna, and near the borders of

Silesia. At Olmütz, Dr Bollmann ascertained, that several state prisoners were kept in the citadel with a degree of caution and mystery, which must have been not unlike that used towards the half fabulous personage in the iron mask. He did not doubt but Lafayette was one of them, and making himself professionally acquainted with the military surgeon of the post, soon became sure of it. By very ingenious means, Dr Bollmann contrived to communicate his projects through this surgeon to Lafayette, and to obtain answers without exciting the surgeon's suspicions; until, at last, after the lapse of several months, during which, to avoid all risk, Dr Bollmann made a long visit at Vienna, it was determined, that an attempt should be made to rescue Lafayette, while on one of the airings, with which he was then regularly indulged on account of his broken health.

As soon as this was arranged, Dr Bollmann returned to Vienna, and communicated his project to a young American, by the name of Francis K. Huger, then accidentally in Austria; son of the person at whose house, near Charleston, Lafayette had been first received on his landing in America; a young man of uncommon talent, decision, and enthusiasm, who at once entered into the whole design, and devoted himself to its execution with the most romantic earnestness. These were the only two

persons on the continent, except Lafayette himself, who had the slightest suspicion of these arrangements for his rescue, and neither of these persons knew him by sight. It was therefore concerted between the parties, after the two friends had come to Olmütz in November, that, to avoid all mistakes when the rescue should be attempted, each should take off his hat and wipe his forehead, in sign of recognition; and then, having ascertained a day when Lafayette would ride out, Dr Bollmann and Mr Huger sent their carriage ahead to Hoff, a post town about twenty-five miles on the road they wished to take, with directions to have it waiting for them at a given hour. The rescue they determined to attempt on horseback; and they put no balls into their pistols, and took no other weapons, thinking it would be unjustifiable to commit a murder even to effect their purpose.

Having ascertained that a carriage which they supposed must contain Lafayette, since there was a prisoner and an officer inside and a guard behind, had passed out of the gate of the fortress, they mounted and followed. They rode by it, and then slackening their pace and allowing it again to go ahead, exchanged signals with the prisoner. At two or three miles from the gate, the carriage left the high road, and passing into a less frequented track in the midst of an open country, Lafayette

descended to walk for exercise, guarded only by the officer who had been riding with him. This was evidently the moment for their attempt. They therefore rode up at once ; and after an inconsiderable struggle with the officer, from which the guard fled to alarm the citadel, the rescue was completed. One of the horses, however, had escaped during the contest, and thus only one remained with which to proceed. Lafayette was immediately mounted on this horse, and Mr Huger told him, in English, to go to Hoff. He mistook what was said to him for a mere general direction to go *off*—delayed a moment to see if he could not assist them—then went on—then rode back again, and asked once more, if he could be of no service—and finally, urged anew, galloped slowly away.

The horse, that had escaped, was soon recovered, and both Dr Bollmann and Mr Huger mounted him, intending to follow and assist Lafayette. But the animal proved intractable,\* threw them and left them, for some time, stunned by their fall. On recovering their horse a second time, Dr Bollmann alone mounted ; Mr Huger thinking that, from his own imperfect knowledge of the German, he could not do as much towards effecting their main purpose.

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\* This was the horse prepared for Lafayette. The other, on which it had been necessary to mount him, had been expressly trained to carry two persons.

These accidents defeated their romantic enterprise. Mr Huger, who could now attempt his escape only on foot, was soon stopped by some peasants, who had witnessed what had passed. Dr Bollmann easily arrived at Hoff; but not finding Lafayette there, lingered about the frontiers till the next night, when he too was arrested and delivered up to the Austrians. And finally Lafayette, having taken a wrong road and pursued it till his horse could proceed no further, was stopped at the village of Jägersdorff, as a suspicious person, and detained there till he was recognised by an officer from Olmütz, two days afterwards. All three of them were brought back to the citadel separately, and were there separately confined without being permitted to know any thing of each other's fate. Mr Huger was chained to the floor, in a small arched dungeon, about six feet by eight, without light and with only bread and water for food; and once in six hours, by day and by night, the guard entered, and, with a lamp, examined each brick in his cell, and each link in his chain. To his earnest request to know something of Dr Bollmann, and to learn whether Lafayette had escaped, he received no answer at all. To his more earnest request to be permitted to send to his mother in America merely the words, "I am alive," signed with his name, he received a rude refusal. Indeed, at first,



every degree of brutal severity was practised towards both of them ; but, afterwards, this severity was relaxed. The two prisoners were placed nearer together, where they could communicate ; and their trial for what, in Vienna, was magnified into a wide and alarming conspiracy, was begun with all the tedious formalities, that could be prescribed by Austrian fear and caution. How it would have turned, if they had been left entirely unprotected, it is not difficult to conjecture ; but at this crisis of their fate, they were secretly assisted by Count Metrowsky, a nobleman living near their prison, whom neither of them had ever seen, and who was interested in them, only for what, in the eyes of his government, constituted their crime. The means he used to influence the tribunal that judged them, may be easily imagined, since they were so far successful, that the prisoners, after having been confined for trial eight months, were sentenced only to a fortnight's imprisonment as their punishment, and then released. A few hours after they had left Olmütz, an order came from Vienna directing a new trial, which under the management of the ministers would of course have ended very differently from the one managed by Count Metrowsky ; but the prisoners were already beyond the limits of the Austrian dominions.

Lafayette, in the meanwhile, was thrown back into his obscure and ignominious sufferings, with hardly a hope that they could be terminated, except by his death. During the winter of 1794-5, he was reduced to almost the last extremity by a violent fever; and yet was deprived of proper attendance, of air, of suitable food, and of decent clothes. To increase his misery, he was made to believe, that he was only reserved for a public execution, and that his chivalrous deliverers would perish on the scaffold before his window; while, at the same time, he was not permitted to know whether his family were still alive, or had fallen under the revolutionary axe, of which, during the few days he was out of his dungeon, he had heard such appalling accounts.

Madame de Lafayette, however, was nearer to him than he could imagine to be possible. She had been released from prison, where she, too, had nearly perished;\* and, having gained strength sufficient for the undertaking, and sent her eldest son for safety to the care of General Washington, she set out, accompanied by her two young daughters, for Germany, all in disguise, and with American

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\* Her grandmother, the Duchess de Noailles, her mother, the Duchess d'Ayen, and her sister, the Countess de Noailles, all perished in one day on the scaffold. The same scaffold was destined for Madame de Lafayette; and she was saved only by the death of Robespierre.

passports. They were landed at Altona, and, proceeding immediately to Vienna, obtained an audience of the Emperor, who refused to liberate Lafayette, but, as it now seems probable, against the intentions of his ministers gave them permission to join him in his prison. They went instantly to Olmütz; but before they could enter, they were deprived of whatever they had brought with them to alleviate the miseries of a dungeon, and required, if they should pass its threshold, never again to leave it. Madame de Lafayette's health soon sunk under the complicated sufferings and privations of her loathsome imprisonment, and she wrote to Vienna for permission to pass a week in the capital, to breathe purer air and obtain medical assistance. Two months elapsed before any answer was returned; and then she was told, that no objection would be made to her leaving her husband; but that, if she should do so, she must never return to him. She immediately and formally signed her consent and determination "to share his captivity in all its details;" and never afterwards made an effort to leave him. Madame de Staël has well observed, when on this point of the history of the French Revolution;—"antiquity offers nothing more admirable, than the conduct of General Lafayette, his wife, and his daughters, in the prison of Olmütz."

One more attempt was made to effect the liberation of Lafayette, and it was made in the place and in the way, that might have been expected. When the Emperor of Austria refused the liberty of her husband to Madame de Lafayette, he told her that "his hands were tied." In this remark, the Emperor could, of course, allude to no law or constitution of his empire, and therefore his hands could be tied only by engagements with his allies in the war against France. England was one of these allies, and General Fitzpatrick, in the House of Commons, made a motion, for an inquiry into the case, in which he was supported by Colonel Tarlton, who had fought against Lafayette in Virginia. Afterwards, on the 16th of December 1796, General Fitzpatrick renewed his attempt more solemnly, and was supported in it by Wilberforce, by Sheridan, and by Fox, in one of his most powerful and happy speeches; but the motion was lost. One effect, however, unquestionably followed from it:—a solemn and vehement discussion, on Lafayette's imprisonment, in which the Emperor of Austria found no apologist, had been held in the face of all Europe; and all Europe, of course, was informed of his sufferings, in the most solemn and authentic way.

When, therefore, General Clarke was sent from Paris to join Bonaparte in Italy, and negotiate a

peace with the Austrians, it was understood, that he received orders from the Directory to stipulate for the deliverance of the prisoners in Olmütz, since it was impossible for France to consent to such an outrage on the rights of citizenship, as would be implied by their further detention. On opening the negotiation, an attempt was made on the part of Austria, to compel Lafayette to receive his freedom on conditions prescribed to him ; but this he distinctly refused ; and, in a document that has often been published, declared with a firmness, which we can hardly believe would have survived such sufferings, that he would never accept his liberation in any way, that should compromise his rights and duties, either as a Frenchman, or *as an American citizen*. Bonaparte often said, that, of all the difficulties in this protracted negotiation with the Coalition, the greatest was the delivery of Lafayette. He was, however, at last released with his family on the 25th of August, 1797 ; Madame de Lafayette and her daughters having been confined twenty-two months, and Lafayette himself five years, in a disgraceful spirit of vulgar cruelty and revenge, of which modern history can afford, we trust, very few examples.\*

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\* Madame de Lafayette never entirely recovered from it. Her constitution had been crushed by her sufferings ; and

France was still too little settled to promise peace or safety to Lafayette and his family. They proceeded first to Hamburg; and then, after causing

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though she lived ten years afterwards, she never had the health with which she entered the dungeon of Olmütz. She died, at last, at La Grange, in December 1807.

During Lafayette's imprisonment, our own government employed such means as were in its power for his release. The American ministers at the European Courts were instructed to use their exertions to this end; and when Washington found that no success was to be hoped from this quarter, he wrote a letter with his own hand to the Emperor of Austria, interceding in behalf of this early friend of American liberty. The letter is introduced in this place, as reflecting honor on the feelings and character of Washington, and as expressing sentiments not more deeply cherished by him, than by a whole nation.

“It will readily occur to your majesty, that occasions may sometimes exist, on which official considerations would constrain the chief of a nation to be silent and passive, in relation even to objects which affect his sensibility, and claim his interposition as a man. Finding myself precisely in this situation at present, I take the liberty of writing this private letter to your majesty, being persuaded that my motives will also be my apology for it.

“In common with the people of this country, I retain a strong and cordial sense of the services rendered to them by the Marquis de Lafayette; and my friendship for him has been constant and sincere. It is natural, therefore, that I should sympathize with him and his family in their misfortunes; and endeavor to mitigate the calamities they experience,

their rights both as French and American citizens to be formally recognised, went to the neighboring neutral territories of Holstein, where they lived in retirement and tranquillity about a year. There they were joined by their eldest son, who came to them from the family of General Washington; there, too, their eldest daughter was married to Latour Maubourg, brother of the person who had shared Lafayette's captivity; and there he first devoted himself with great earnestness to those agricultural pursuits, which have since constituted the occupation and the happiness of his life. From Hol-

among which his present confinement is not the least distressing.

"I forbear to enlarge on this delicate subject. Permit me only to submit to your majesty's consideration, whether his long imprisonment, and the confiscation of his estate, and the indigence and dispersion of his family, and the painful anxieties incident to all these circumstances, do not form an assemblage of sufferings, which recommend him to the mediation of humanity? Allow me, Sir, on this occasion to be its organ, and to entreat that he may be permitted to come to this country, on such conditions as your majesty may think it expedient to prescribe.

"As it is a maxim with me not to ask what, under similar circumstances, I would not grant, your majesty will do me the justice to believe, that this request appears to me to correspond with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom, which form the basis of sound policy and durable glory."

stein he went at the formal invitation of the Batavian republic, and established himself for several months at Utrecht in Holland, where he was treated with great consideration and kindness, and where he had the advantage of being nearer to the borders of his own country. While he was thus living tranquil and happy, but anxiously watching the progress of events in France, the revolution of the 18th Brumaire, November 10th, 1799, happened, and promised for a time to settle the government of his country on a safer foundation. He immediately returned to France, and established himself at La Grange ; a fine old castle, surrounded by a moderate estate about forty miles from Paris, where he has lived ever since.

When, however, Bonaparte, to whom the revolution of the 18th Brumaire had given supreme control, began to frame his constitution and organize his government, Lafayette perceived, at once, that the principles of freedom would not be permanently respected. He had several interviews and political discussions with the Consul, and was much pressed to accept the place of Senator, with its accompanying revenues, in the new order of things ; but he refused, determined not to involve himself in changes, which he already foresaw he should not approve. In 1802, Bonaparte asked to be made First Consul for life ; Lafayette voted



against it, entered his protest, and sent a letter to Bonaparte himself; and from this moment all intercourse between them ceased. Bonaparte even went so far as to refuse to promote Lafayette's eldest son, and his son-in-law Lasteyrie, though they distinguished themselves repeatedly in the army; and once, when a report of the services of the former in a bulletin was offered him, he erased it with impatience, saying, "These Lafayettes cross my path everywhere." Discouraged, therefore, in every way in which they could be of service to their country, the whole family was at last collected at La Grange, and lived there in the happiest retirement, so long as the despotism of Bonaparte lasted.

The restoration of the Bourbons in 1814 made no change in Lafayette's relations. He presented himself once at court, and was very kindly received; but the government they established was so different from the representative government, which he had assisted to form, and sworn to support in 1789, that he did not again present himself at the palace. The Bourbons, by neglecting entirely to understand or conciliate the nation, at the end of a year brought back Bonaparte, who landed the first of March, 1815, and reached the capital on the 20th. His appearance in Paris was like a theatrical illusion, and his policy seemed to be to

play all men, of all parties, like the characters of a great drama, around him. Immediately on his arrival upon the soil of France, he endeavored to win the old friends of French freedom; and the same day that he made his irruption into the ancient palace of the Thuilleries, he appointed Carnot his minister of war, and Carnot was weak enough to accept the appointment with the title of Count. In a similar way, he endeavored to obtain the countenance and cooperation of Lafayette. Joseph Bonaparte, to whom Lafayette had been personally known, and for whom he entertained a personal regard, was employed by the Emperor to consult and conciliate him; but Lafayette would hold no communion with the new order of things. He even refused, though most pressingly solicited, to have an interview with the Emperor; and ended, when still further urged, by positively declaring, that he could never meet him, unless it should be as a representative freely chosen by the people.

On the 22d of April, Napoleon offered to the French nation his *Acte Additionel*, or an addition, as he chose to consider it, to the constitutions of 1799, 1802, and 1804; confirming thereby the principles of his former despotism, but establishing, among other things, an hereditary chamber of peers, and an elective chamber of representatives. This act was accepted, or pretended to be accepted,

by the votes of the French people ; but Lafayette entered his solemn protest against it, in the same spirit with which he had protested against the Consulship for life. The very college of Electors, however, who received his protest, unanimously chose him first to be their President, and afterwards to be their Representative ; and the Emperor, determined to obtain his influence, or at least his silence, offered him the first peerage in the new chamber he was forming. Lafayette was as true to his principles, as he had often been before, under more difficult circumstances. He accepted the place of representative, and declined the peerage.

As a representative of the people he saw Bonaparte, for the first time, at the opening of the chambers, on the 7th of June. "It is above twelve years since we have met, General," said Napoleon, with great kindness of manner, when he saw Lafayette ; but Lafayette received the Emperor with marked distrust ; and all his efforts were directed, as he then happily said they should be, "to make the chamber, of which he was a member, a representation of the French people, and not a Napoleon club." Of three candidates for the presidency of the chamber, on the first ballot, Lafayette and Lanjuinais had the highest number of votes ; but finding that the Emperor had declared he would not accept Lanjuinais, if he

should be chosen, Lafayette used great exertions and obtained a majority for him ; to which circumstances compelled Napoleon to submit. From this moment, until after the battle of Waterloo, which happened in twelve days, Lafayette did not make himself prominent in the chamber. He voted for all judicious supplies, on the ground that France was invaded, and that it was the duty of all Frenchmen to defend their country ; but he in no way implicated himself in Bonaparte's projects or fortunes, with which it was impossible that he could have any thing in common.

At last, on the 21st of June, Bonaparte arrived from Waterloo, a defeated and desperate man. He was already determined to dissolve the representative body, and, assuming the whole dictatorship of the country, play, at least, one deep and bloody game for power and success. Some of his council, and, among the rest, Regnault de St Jean d' Angely, who were opposed to this violent measure, informed Lafayette, that it would be taken instantly, and that in two hours the chamber of representatives would cease to exist. There was, of course, not a moment left for consultation or advice ; the Emperor, or the chamber, must fall that morning. As soon, therefore, as the session was opened, Lafayette, with the same clear courage and in the same spirit of self-devotion, with

which he had stood at the bar of the National Assembly in 1792, immediately ascended the Tribune for the first time for twenty years, and said these few words, which assuredly would have been his death warrant, if he had not been supported in them by the assembly he addressed ; “ When, after an interval of many years, I raise a voice which the friends of free institutions will still recognise, I feel myself called upon to speak to you only of the dangers of the country, which you alone have now the power to save. Sinister intimations have been heard ; they are unfortunately confirmed. This, therefore, is the moment for us to gather round the ancient tricolored standard ; the standard of ’89 ; the standard of freedom, of equal rights, and of public order. Permit then, gentlemen, a veteran in this sacred cause, one who has always been a stranger to the spirit of faction, to offer you a few preparatory resolutions, whose absolute necessity, I trust, you will feel, as I do.” These resolutions declared the chamber to be in permanent session, and all attempts to dissolve it, high treason ; and they also called for the four principal ministers to come to the chamber, and explain the state of affairs. Bonaparte is said to have been much agitated, when word was brought him simply that Lafayette was in the tribune ; and his fears were certainly not ill founded, for these

resolutions, which were at once adopted, both by the representatives and the peers, substantially divested him of his power, and left him merely a factious and dangerous individual in the midst of a distracted state.

He hesitated during the whole day, as to the course he should pursue ; but, at last, hoping that the eloquence of Lucien, which had saved him on the 18th Brumaire, might be found no less effectual now, he sent him with the three other ministers to the chamber, just at the beginning of the evening ; having first obtained a vote, that all should pass in secret session. It was certainly a most perilous crisis. Reports were abroad that the populace of the Fauxbourgs had been excited, and were arming themselves. It was believed, too, with no little probability, that Bonaparte would march against the chamber, as he had formerly marched against the council of Five Hundred, and disperse them at the point of the bayonet. At all events, it was a contest for existence, and no man could feel his life safe. At this moment, Lucien rose, and in the doubtful and gloomy light, which two vast torches shed through the hall and over the pale and anxious features of the members, made a partial exposition of the state of affairs, and the projects and hopes he still entertained. A deep and painful silence followed. At length

Mr Jay, well known above twenty years ago in Boston, under the assumed name of Renaud, as a teacher of the French Language, and an able writer in one of the public newspapers of that city, ascended the Tribune, and, in a long and vehement speech of great eloquence, exposed the dangers of the country, and ended by proposing to send a deputation to the Emperor, demanding his abdication. Lucien immediately followed. He never showed more power, or a more impassioned eloquence. His purpose was to prove, that France was still devoted to the Emperor, and that its resources were still equal to a contest with the allies. "It is not Napoleon," he cried, "that is attacked, it is the French people. And a proposition is now made to this people, to abandon their Emperor; to expose the French nation, before the tribunal of the world, to a severe judgment on its levity and inconstancy. No, sir, the honor of this nation shall never be so compromised!" On hearing these words, Lafayette rose. He did not go to the tribune; but spoke, contrary to rule and custom, from his place. His manner was perfectly calm, but marked with the very spirit of rebuke; and he addressed himself, not to the President, but directly to Lucien. "The assertion, which has just been uttered, is a calumny. Who shall dare to accuse the French nation of incon-

stancy to the Emperor Napoleon? That nation has followed his bloody footsteps through the sands of Egypt and through the wastes of Russia; over fifty fields of battle; in disaster as faithfully as in victory; and it is for having thus devotedly followed him, that we now mourn the blood of three millions of Frenchmen." These few words made an impression on the Assembly, which could not be mistaken or resisted; and, as Lafayette ended, Lucien himself bowed respectfully to him, and, without resuming his speech, sat down.

It was determined to appoint a deputation of five members from each chamber, to meet the grand council of the ministers, and deliberate in committee, on the measures to be taken. This body sat during the night, under the presidency of Cambaceres, Arch Chancellor of the empire. The first thing that was done in this committee was to devise and arrange every possible means of resisting the invasion of the allies and the Bourbons; and Lafayette was foremost in giving the Government, for this purpose, every thing that could be asked. But it was apparent, from the representations of the ministers themselves, that they could carry on the war no longer. Lafayette then moved that a deputation should be sent to Napoleon, demanding his abdication. The Arch Chan-



cellor refused to put the motion ; but it was as much decided, as if it had been formally carried. The next morning, June 22d, the Emperor sent in his abdication, and Lafayette was on the committee that went to the Thuilleries to thank him for it, on behalf of the nation.

It had been the intention of a majority of both chambers, from the moment of their convocation, to form a free constitution for the country, and to call the whole people to arms to resist the invasion. In both of these great purposes, they had been constantly opposed by Bonaparte, and in the few hurried and anxious days that preceded the battle of Waterloo, there had been time to do very little. There was now nothing but confusion. A project was arranged to place Lafayette at the head of affairs ; because it was known that he could carry with him the confidence of the nation, and especially that of the National Guards, whom he would immediately have called out *en masse*. But a scene of most unworthy intrigues was immediately begun. A crude, provisional government was established, with the infamous Fouché, as its President, which lasted only a few days, and whose principal measure was the sending of a deputation to the allied powers, of which Lafayette was the head, to endeavor to stop the invasion of France. This of course failed, as had been foreseen ; Paris

surrendered on the 3d of July, and what remained of the representative government, which Bonaparte had created for his own purposes, but which Lafayette had turned against him, was soon afterwards dissolved. Its doors were found guarded on the morning of the 8th, but by what authority has never been known; and the members met at Lafayette's house, entered their formal protest, and went quietly to their own homes.

Lafayette retired immediately to La Grange, from which, in fact, he had been only a month absent, and resumed at once his agricultural employments. There, in the midst of a family of twenty children and grand children, who all look up to him as their patriarchal chief, he lives in a simple and sincere happiness rarely granted to those, who have borne such a leading part in the troubles and sufferings of a great period of political revolution. Since 1817 he has been twice elected to the Chamber of Deputies, and in all his votes has shown himself constant to his ancient principles. When the ministry proposed to establish a censorship of the press, he resisted them in an able speech; but Lafayette was never a factious man, and therefore he has never made any further opposition to the present order of things in France, than his conscience and his official place required. That he does not approve the present constitution

of the monarchy, or the political principles and management of the existing government, his votes as a deputy, and his whole life, plainly show ; and that his steady and temperate opposition is matter of serious anxiety to the family now on the throne is apparent, from their conduct towards him during the last nine years, and their management of the public press since he has been in this country. If he chose to make himself a Tribune of the people, he might at any moment become formidable ; but he trusts rather to the progress of general intelligence and political wisdom throughout the nation, which he feels sure will, at last, bring his country to the practically free government, he has always been ready to sacrifice his life to purchase for it. To this great result he looks forward, as Madame de Staël has well said of him, with the entire confidence a pious man enjoys in a future life ; but, when he feels anxious and impatient to hasten onward to it, he finds a wisdom tempered by long experience stirring within him, which warns him, in the beautiful language of Milton, that “ they also serve who only stand and wait.”

This is the distinguished personage, who, after an absence of eight and thirty years, is now come to visit the nation, for whose independence and freedom he hazarded whatever is most valued in

human estimation, almost half a century ago. He comes, too, at the express invitation of the entire people ; he is literally the “ Guest of the Nation ;” but the guest, it should be remembered, of another generation, than the one he originally came to serve. We rejoice at it. We rejoice, in common with the thousands who throng his steps wherever he passes, that we are permitted to offer this tribute of a gratitude and veneration, which cannot be misinterpreted, to one, who suffered with our fathers for our sake ; but we rejoice yet more for the moral effect it cannot fail to produce on us, both as individuals and as a people. For it is no common spectacle, which is now placed before *each of us* for our instruction. We are permitted to see one, who, by the mere force of principle, by plain and resolved integrity, has passed with perfect consistency, through more remarkable extremes of fortune, than any man now alive, or, perhaps, any man on record. We are permitted to see one who has borne a leading and controlling part in two hemispheres, and in the two most important revolutions the world has yet seen, and has come forth from both of them without the touch of dishonor. We are permitted to see that man, who first put in jeopardy his rank and fortune at home, in order to serve as a volunteer in the cause of Free Institutions in America, and after-

wards hazarded his life at the bar of the National Assembly, to arrest the same cause, when it was tending to excess and violence. We are permitted to see the man, who, after three years of unbroken political triumph, stood in the midst of half a million of his countrymen, comprehending whatever was great, wise, and powerful in the nation, with the *oriflamme* of the monarchy at his feet, and the confidence of all France following his words, as he swore on their behalf to a free constitution ; and yet remained undazzled and unseduced by his vast, his irresistible popularity. We are permitted to see the man, who, for the sake of the same principles to which he had thus sworn, and in less than three years afterwards, was condemned to such obscure sufferings, that his very existence became doubtful to the world, and the place of his confinement was effectually hidden from the inquiries of his friends, who sent emissaries over half Europe to discover it ; and yet remained unshaken and undismayed, constantly refusing all appearance of compromise with his persecutors and oppressors. We are, in short, permitted to see a man, who has professed, amidst glory and suffering, in triumph and in disgrace, the same principles of political freedom on both sides of the Atlantic ; who has maintained the same tone, the same air, the same open confidence, amidst the ruins of the

Bastille, in the Champ de Mars, under the despotism of Bonaparte, and in the dungeons of Olmütz.

We rejoice, too, no less in the effect which this visit of General Lafayette is producing upon us *as a nation*. It is doing much to unite us. It has brought those together, who have been separated by long lives of political animosity. It helps to break down the great boundaries and landmarks of party. It makes a holiday of kind and generous feelings in the hearts of the multitudes that throng his way, as he moves in triumphal procession from city to city. It turns this whole people from the bustle and divisions of our wearisome elections, the contests of the senatehouse, and the troubles and bitterness of our manifold political dissensions; and instead of all this, carries us back to that great period in our history, about which opinions have long been tranquil and settled. It offers to us, as it were, with the very costume and air appropriate to the times, one of the great actors, from this most solemn passage in our national destinies; and thus enables us to transmit yet one generation further onward, a sensible impression of the times of our fathers; since we are not only permitted to witness ourselves one of their foremost leaders and champions, but can show him to our children, and thus leave in their young hearts an impression, which will grow old there with their deepest and

purest feelings. It brings, in fact, our revolution nearer to us, with all the highminded patriotism and selfdenying virtues of our forefathers; and therefore naturally turns our thoughts more towards our posterity, and makes us more anxious to do for them what we are so sensibly reminded was done with such perilous sacrifices for us.

We may be allowed, too, to add, that we rejoice in General Lafayette's visit *on his own account*. He enjoys a singular distinction; for it is a strange thing in the providence of God, one that never happened before, and will, probably, never happen again, that an individual from a remote quarter of the world, having assisted to lay the foundation of a great nation, should be permitted thus to visit the posterity of those he served, and witness on a scale so vast, the work of his own sacrifices; the result of grand principles in government for which he contended before their practical effect had been tried; the growth and maturity of institutions, which he assisted to establish, when their operation could be calculated only by the widest and most clearsighted circumspection. We rejoice in it, for it is, we doubt not, the most gratifying and appropriate reward, that could be offered to a spirit like his. In the beautiful phrase which Tacitus has applied to Germanicus, *fruitur famâ*; for he must be aware, that the ocean which rolls be-

tween us and Europe, operates like the grave on all feelings of passion and party, and that the voice of gratitude and admiration, which now rises to greet him, from every city, every village, and every heart, of this wide land, is as pure and sincere as the voice of posterity.





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